

THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF ITINERANT LIFE:

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
REV. SIMON PETER RICHARDSON, D.D.,
OF THE NORTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
REV. JOHN B. ROBINS, D.D.

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PREFACE.

THE autobiography of the Rev. S. P. Richardson was written at the request of the North Georgia Conference. During the session of the Conference held at Athens, November 24, 1897, the following resolution was introduced and passed:

Whereas our brother S. P. Richardson, D.D., has had a wide and varied experience in the itinerant ministry; and whereas the biography of Methodist preachers has been the richest treasure in Methodist history:

Resolved, That Dr. S. P. Richardson be requested by this Conference to prepare for publication the story of his life, in the form of an autobiography.

This resolution was signed by J. V. M. Morris, George G. Smith, D. J. Myrick, and L. P. Winter. In accordance with the wish of his brethren, Dr. Richardson began at once "the story of his life." The following pages give us the result of his labors. He was spared by a kind Providence to finish this piece of work, and leave it for the guidance and help of Methodists. He died June 15, 1899.

INTRODUCTION.

THE North Georgia Conference did a great deed when it asked Dr. Richardson to write the story of his life. His experience covers nearly sixty years of Methodist history, and embraces the most trying events that a great Church has ever been called upon to pass through. He has faithfully given us the facts in connection with his work. These will be useful for all time.

In many respects Dr. Richardson was the most marvelous man of this generation. His disposition, his mental aptitudes, his studies, all had a tendency to set him apart from other men. He did not act or think or speak like other men. Every act, thought, word bore the impress of his unique personality. It was his act that was done, his thought that was uttered, and his word that was spoken. He borrowed nothing, called no man his master, and served only Christ and his fellow-men. He was outspoken in his utterances, courageous in his statements, and charitable in his opinions. He was true enough to Christ to mean what he said,

and to say what he meant. He was brave enough to think for himself, and to speak what he thought. He was broad-minded enough in his notions of life and religion to be charitable even in the presence of narrowness and stupidity.

His social qualities were far beyond those of most men. He loved to talk, and he did so with good sense. Many a sad heart has been made bright by his words. Many a sinking spirit has been filled with new hope by his wonderful vision of "things not seen." Many a perplexed mind has found firm ground through his profound thinking about God and human life. He went through this life scattering joy and sunshine along his pathway, respected by old and young, and loved by all.

He was a profound and fearless thinker. He cared not for opinions because they were old, and had little respect for those whose claim was based on novelty. What he wanted and craved was the truth; it made no difference with him whether it was old or new. Accused of heresy and criticised for his freedom of thought, he faced every tempest and moved in triumph to the end of his life. He was the same brave, true, noble spirit, whether speaking in the

churches of the rich or standing on the floor of a little chapel in the mountains. He was too true to speak what he did not believe, and too honest to utter what he had not studied for himself. Many things hoary with age he did not believe, and he said so. Many things contained in no man's creed he did believe, and he preached as he believed. He loved the truth better than anything else, and sought by all the powers of his great mind to make that truth articulate to men.

He was a philosopher in the highest sense of the word. He grasped with clearness the best ideas of life, and reached heights in his thinking to which only a few are ever able to climb. He knew two things better than most men. One was his own religious bearings from a rational standpoint; and the other, the powers of his own luminous mind. The force of the first showed itself in his hatred of sin; that of the other, in thinking a Christ large enough to save the human race.

He possessed wit of a high order, and sarcasm that was like a consuming fire. The first made him the interesting talker and matchless preacher; the second made him the dread of lit-

tleness and the invincible antagonist. What he could not overthrow by the powers of his reason, he could easily burn up by the powers of his ridicule. How he was loved and hated!—loved by those who knew him best, and hated by those who either could not or would not understand him.

His last days were full of hope, and in his dying hour he had the victory. Truly, it may be said of him that a great man in our Israel has fallen. The friend, that counseled in the hour of sadness, is gone. The prophet, that told anew the story of his Lord and his love, is silent. The thinker, that blessed childhood with a new meaning and forced into life the power of a new impulse, sleeps with his fathers. The heart of the man, who dared to say and to do what was true for his people, is still forever. The transcendent mind, that seemed to sweep all the intellectual spheres, is no longer in its home of clay, but at home in one “whose maker and builder is God.”

Dr. B. H. Sasnett has embodied Dr. Richardson's last words in a beautiful poem, published soon after his death in Macon, Ga. With it I close this Introduction:

“IT’S ALMOST MORNING NOW.”

It was toward the end of the earthly night,
The sands of life were running low;
The dying saint caught glimpses of the light,
And said, “It’s almost morning now.”

Far from beyond the orient hills, a gleam
Had traveled to the world below;
He saw the light long sought in prayer and dream,
And said, “It’s almost morning now.”

O saint of God, the mists and night are gone;
Peace, endless peace, enwreathes thy brow;
O’er land and sea immortal light has shone,
And morning gilds the mountains now.

JOHN B. ROBINS.

Athens, Ga.

OPENING STATEMENTS.

I HAVE been requested by many friends, and by a resolution of the North Georgia Conference, to give to the Church a sketch of the incidents of my itinerant life. I have declined to do this in years past, for many reasons. It is one thing to relate an incident in the presence of interested friends, and quite another to put the same incident on paper. There have been many changes and incidents during my life that would be of interest to this generation. Many of these changes have taken place in other Churches, as well as in the Methodist Church; whether for the better or the worse, I will not discuss at present.

I was born in what is known as the Dutch Fork, Newberry District, South Carolina, May 13, 1818. I have some knowledge of my ancestors on both sides for more than two hundred years. My grandparents on my mother's side were born in Hanover, and belonged to the German race. They came to South Carolina when young. In religion they were decided Lutherans. My paternal grandparents were English.

I was baptized in the Lutheran Church when a child. At that time there was no other denomination in the Dutch Fork. I knew nothing about other Churches, only as I heard of them through common talk. The Methodists were very much persecuted at that time.

I have prayed all my life; never sowed any "wild oats"; never knew one kind of whisky from another—was opposed to whisky from a small boy. I was converted, and backslid many times before I joined the Church. My father moved to Georgia before I was grown. There I heard Baptists, Methodists, and sometimes Presbyterians preach. When about twenty years old I decided to join the Church. I knew little about creeds, but enough to know that I did not believe the Calvinistic doctrine. I joined the Methodist Church, in spite of all my early prejudices, because I believed the doctrines of that Church. When I united with the Church I gave myself entirely to its service, and have never refused to do anything required of me by the Church. I was appointed class leader and exhorter before my probation ended. I was licensed to preach by the Rev. J. B. Paine, presiding elder, and recom-

mended for admission into the Annual Conference.

I went to school at a very early age. I cannot remember when I was unable to read; I always loved books. I was brought up without any deep-rooted prejudices, and have always been able, more or less to judge of facts and evidence without partiality. I have always sought to know the truth, regardless of my environment.

After I was received into the Conference, I felt the need of higher educational advantages, but it was difficult to get suitable teachers, and more difficult to command their time for instruction. If I had to live my life over again, I would put emphasis on the study of my own language, and especially elocution.

My life has been subjected to continual changes from light to shadow, and from shadow to light again. I do not expect to escape the shadows until I reach that country where God is the light, "and there is no night there."

I superannuated at the close of the fifty-fourth year of my itinerant life. My farm was in quite a dilapidated condition, and I spent two years working on it. When I had just gotten comfort-

ably situated, my house, library, and all were destroyed by fire. The property was not insured. I sold the land for what I could get, and am now living around among my children, having no permanent place of abode. My good wife still remains with me. We have reared and educated ten children, six girls and four boys. All of my boys are lawyers: one is judge on the Montgomery (Ala.) circuit.

Most men talk too much. The tongue is located in the brain, and charged with the responsibility of outwardly reporting the inner thought of the mind. It is often said, Be natural. That is right, but the finest marble, in its natural state, needs the incentives of the gavel and chisel. I studied Butler's Analogy and all the books I could get on the evidences of Christianity; but I never read a book on the subject that did me any good, except "Evil Not of God," by Dr. Young. The Bible and my own personal experience are, to my mind, the strongest evidences of the truth of Christianity. I have some knowledge of atheism, polytheism, heathenism, Judaism, and Christianity; some knowledge of science and metaphysics; and I also have some knowl-

edge of another fact—that “a little learning is a dangerous thing.” The best way is to follow the cloud by day and camp at night under its watch-fires. God knows all the way better than we do.

My first four years as a preacher were spent in the old Georgia Conference, which was divided in 1844. The Florida Conference was organized in 1845, and embraced all of middle and east Florida and thirty counties of southern Georgia, from Fort Gaines in the west to Mobley Bluff on the east to Ocmulgee River. I remained in the Florida Conference until 1865, when I accepted the General Agency of the American Bible Society for Alabama and west Florida. I continued in this agency eight years; then served four years on the Union Springs District. Bishop Pierce invited me to return to the North Georgia Conference, not to fill any special appointment, but he assigned me to the Rome District.

I have been at both ends of the line. When I was a young man, the brethren complained of having young, inexperienced men on the circuits; when I became old, the station preferred an active young man. I soon grew out of the first complaint, but the only way out of the second was to superannuate out.

THE AUTHOR.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF ITINERANT LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Reception into the Conference—The Preachers—Incidents of First Year's Itinerant Life on Telfair Circuit.

I WAS received on trial into the Georgia Conference, held in Mulberry Street Church, Macon, Ga., December, 1840. Bishop Andrew presided. I was entertained at the home of Colonel Harde-
man, who lived in Vineville, which was only a small village at that time. He was a prince in Israel, always ready for every good word and work.

Everything about the Conference was new and strange to me. Bishop Andrew was in the prime of life, and a grand preacher. He never indulged in science, metaphysics, or abstractions, but preached right on to salvation and heaven. He gave to everything and prayed always. He never professed holiness, but lived it. He was one of the purest men I ever knew.

The next man that claimed my special attention was the Rev. Louis Myers. He looked like the patriarch of the Conference. He spoke just what he thought to the bishop and Conference and everybody else. He had been a power in his day, but was then old and superannuated.

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He was dressed in the full Methodist preacher uniform of that day. The peculiar manner in which the preachers were dressed arrested my special attention. All wore straight-breasted or scythe-blade coats, and large white cravats tied around the neck. Many of them had no collar that showed above the cravat.

The Church of that day put much stress on the manner of dress, both of men and women. It may be regarded as a small matter; but fashion wields a powerful influence for evil in the Church of this day. Next to whisky and tobacco, it is one of the greatest burdens the people of this generation have to bear. All were clean-shaved. Dress and whiskers were important things in the Church then. The Florida Conference refused to receive a prominent physician into its membership until I promised that he would cut off his whiskers. The Conference of this age, in dress, has no likeness to the Conference of that age.

The Conference at that time had a score of representative men. Dr. Pierce was in the prime of his great life. He was a fearless preacher and a wonderful declaimer. His appeals were like a cyclone. Drs. Evans, Means, Parks, Anthony, Glenn, George F. Pierce, and Judge Longstreet came into the Conference, and were in my class. Old brother Lane, of New York, was at that Conference—a plain, modest old gentleman—

looking after the Book Concern and papers. If I had the ability I would like to say a few things about those self-sacrificing, great, and good men. With such leaders, no wonder the Methodist Church made such progress in that generation.

Dr. Means was just coming to the front as one of Georgia's pulpit orators. I heard him preach at that Conference from the text, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It was not long before he reached the skies, and with wonderful ease and grace stepped from planet to planet, showed how they all moved around the sun, their common center, from which they all received their light and heat. Then he applied the analogy, how all Christian truth revolved around the Lamb of God, how all hope and faith of an endless life centered in Christ. The preachers shouted, the Church rejoiced, and the orator gained a glorious victory for Christ. It may be insisted, "Let the preachers preach the gospel"; but is not the gospel a chord that vibrates in harmony with earth, seas, and skies? David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God."

G. F. Pierce was full-fledged, and was coming to the front. He had a face and eye of the finest mold. Born an orator, he seemed as much at home in cloud and sky as at evening's quiet twilight on earth. I saw him once when he placed one foot on the Alps and the other on the

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Andes, and swept the whole circle. He was a great man all around and everywhere. He was a stranger to vanity, and seemed to be an entire stranger to his own greatness. God who made the dove and the wren also made the eagle. I have heard Bishop Pierce preach when he looked as if he had just bathed in the river of the water of life and was baptizing the congregation with the very dews of heaven.

John W. Glenn was a thinker, a statesman, and sometimes crushing in debate. He understood the doctrines of Methodism, and knew how to preach them.

James E. Evans had a fine personal appearance, and a voice as soft as a flute's. He was a man of great sympathy. His appeals had a wonderful effect in moving the masses. He seemed to be in his native element when in the midst of a revival. Thousands were converted and brought into the Church by his preaching. He was often spoken of for bishop.

John P. Duncan was the sweet singer of the Conference. Uncle Allen Turner was a man of stern piety. His religion reached all the way through to his beard and the cut of his coat. Parkes and Anthony were material out of which martyrs are made. They are all gone. I venerated and loved them, and hope to meet them all again on the other shore.

Nearly all the preachers of that day traveled

on horseback and moved their families in covered wagons. The Georgia Conference extended from the Blue Ridge to Key West—the territory now embraced in three Conferences. This wonderful Conference (to me) closed, and I was appointed junior preacher on the Telfair Circuit, under Claiborne C. Trussell, one of the purest and best of men. Our circuit extended from Dublin down the Oconee River to the Altamaha, and up the Ocmulgee to Hawkinsville, and across the country back to Dublin.

During Conference I looked around among all the preachers to find a model I thought I could imitate, but in vain. I was forced to fall back on my own individuality. I did not then have, and never had, sense enough to preach when I had nothing to preach. The Church and preachers were much opposed to written or read sermons. In self-defense I have always had to write my sermons, and often to rewrite them many times, which I now have no reason to regret. I would say to the young men, Write and rewrite your sermons. The sermons will be better, and you will be wiser. A man never knows how little he knows until he puts his thoughts on paper. The man who writes his sermons is like the workman who puts a part of his earnings in the savings bank : he always has some cash on hand for emergencies. Don't try to read and preach at the same time. If you read, read ; and if you preach, preach.

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I left Macon in company with brothers Choice, Gordon, and Dr. Steel—all intelligent companions. We stopped that night with a well-to-do brother. The preachers were full of the happenings at Conference and their new fields. I was as sad as the grave—had waked up to all the sober realities of my situation and of my utter want of ability to meet my obligations and the expectations of the Church. I left the company after supper, and went out in the dark to pray, kneeling in the corner of the fence. The dogs found me, and I was forced to get on top of the fence, but saw I was not safe from the pack of fox hounds. I took refuge on a shed built over some potato banks. The boys were roused, and here they came with a torch, exclaiming, "We've got him!" They supposed the dogs were barking at a negro thief who had come to steal their potatoes. You can better imagine how the boys looked than I can write it when they saw it was the young preacher on the shed instead of the negro. They drove off the anxious dogs, and helped me down. By this time the preachers and family were all out on the front piazza, and when the boys gallanted me up they were convulsed with laughter. But there was a nice young lady who looked at me as if I were intensely green.

We reached Dublin Saturday night. There were many good Methodist families in the town, but I never met a colder reception. Let me say in

this connection to the brethren : You have the entire man—his youth and inexperience, his full-grown manhood and old age—to provide for. A Church that has no young men to preach will soon have no old ones. Be kind to the young men ; they will not be young long. I was anxious to leave Dublin ; was sorry to part with my preacher companions, but we separated there. It was about sixty miles to Jacksonville, the county seat of Telfair county, and at the other end of the circuit.

I left Dublin the next morning. It was intensely cold. I had to travel that lonesome way alone. I saw only a few log cabins, and they were far apart. I saw no place where I could stop for dinner. Late in the afternoon I called at a house and asked to spend the night. The man of the house told me that his chimney had fallen and friends had come to see him and he had no room, but four miles beyond I would find a place to stay. There was no house between the two. Tired, cold, and hungry, with my faithful horse in the same fix, I traveled on until dark overtook me. The man had told me nothing about Gum Swamp, the headwaters of little Ocmulgee River. The water was up, covering all the swamp from shore to shore. The swamp is a dense forest of tupelo gum. I could see by starlight this thick forest, and supposed I was lost. I had no matches. If I ventured in I might be drowned ; to lie out was to

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freeze. Putting my saddlebags on my shoulder and my umbrella under my arm, I went forward. The virgin ice was on the surface of the water. Sometimes up and sometimes down, I went on and on. I did not know whether I was going up or down stream or across. I heard a dog bark on the other side, and I am sure no angel's voice will ever sound more welcome to my ears. I felt that I was still in the land of the living. At last I reached the open water. There was now but one alternative, and that was to reach the other shore. My faithful horse groaned deeply, but made the landing. The swamp was about three hundred yards wide. I often passed that way when the water was down. There were many roads and great washouts. If I had diverged to the right or left that would have been the end of my travels. After getting to the other shore I saw a light in the distance. I made my way to it through the tall saw palmetto, over logs and brush. When I reached the house an old gentleman came to the door and asked who I was and where I was from. When I told him I was from Dublin, he said, "Across the swamp, and not drowned?" I told him I was almost drowned and frozen. He was a good old Scotch Presbyterian elder. His children were Methodists. His son helped me to get off my boots, and I soon put on dry clothes. I kept my clothes dry. After supper and prayers, I was soon in bed and forgot the

most eventful day in my life, for I never had a more horrible experience than in that dreadful swamp that night. Blessed sleep! It makes us forget the dangers of the past and hides the future from our fears.

I reached Jacksonville the next day, and met a kind reception at the home of Major Dobson, a noble man whose heart was larger than his purse. I stayed around among the families, when invited—had no permanent place. Having no news from brother Trussell, I had no plan of the circuit, and was obliged to stay. Finally we heard from him and the cause of his delay. He always moved his wife and four children in a rockaway, and took along his feather bed. The Georgia railroad was being built. His wife and children had never seen one. To gratify them he drove up to one of the stations. Old Bob was perhaps as pious as any horse, but when he saw the engine coming, puffing and blowing, he ran away, lamed brother Trussell, and tore things up generally. This left him and his vehicle in a dilapidated condition, and it took more than a week to make repairs. At last he drove up, but there was no parsonage and no house or furniture. The brethren decided to build. They cut and peeled pine poles and built a shanty with dirt chimney, unplanned plank floor, no ceiling overhead, and only one door. In this shanty good, patient sister Trussell and her four children lived, cooked, ate, and slept

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in the same room, while brother Trussell rode the circuit. He was gone sometimes for two weeks. There were many rich and well-to-do Methodists all up and down the Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers, who lived in fine houses.

I suppose there were not a half-dozen parsonages at that time in the Georgia Conference. I lived single for six years, and for over thirty years after I was married I lived in only one parsonage, and an inferior one at that. We hear Catholics, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians talk about the claims of their Churches. What have they ever done for the moral and religious uplifting of the masses of the people of this great nation? To-day you may travel a thousand miles across the continent and not find, outside of the towns and villages, a single Catholic, Episcopal, or Presbyterian church. It may be replied that the country was already preoccupied; but were not the towns also preoccupied, and are not the souls of the country people as precious as the souls of those in town? The Primitive Baptists preached in the country a gospel that had no moral effect upon the lives of the people. The nation to-day owes more to the self-sacrificing labors of Methodist preachers than to all the other Churches combined—a debt of gratitude it can never pay.

In 1842 good brother Crumley lived in a tent at the camp ground with his good wife, while he

preached the gospel to the negroes and rich planters of Glenn and Camden counties.

The first year of my itinerant life was one of more shadows than lights. On my first round many came out to see me because of my youthful appearance, among the number a rich old infidel. On my second round his son, a prominent man and Methodist, took me to church in his carriage. After preaching, he proposed that we go round and dine at his father's. When the old captain saw us coming, he remarked that the devil was still in me—he could see it in my eye, and he would prove that I had never been born again. He came out and met us very roughly, and continued his insults at the table by informing me that he said grace when he killed hogs. I replied that he had better say it then than not at all. His son and grown-up daughter left the table; his wife frowned at him; a visiting lady sat silent. He continued his offensive remarks until the old Adam or something else came very near proving the old captain's prediction; but the mortification of the family caused me to hold in. As soon as dinner was over his son said the carriage was ready, and, bidding the old man a kind good-by, we left. The son was much offended at his father's conduct. If he had been drunk, it might have been accounted for; but he was sober, and there was no cause for his strange conduct. The lady visitor was the principal of

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the female school in Jacksonville, and a stanch Methodist. The next day I passed by the old captain's on my way to Jacksonville. I met him. His whole demeanor was changed. He invited me to his house, but I declined further hospitality. When I reached Jacksonville the whole scene was explained. The lady principal came up and blessed me, said that she had prayed for me, and told me all about what the old captain was trying to do to prove I had never been born again. She said he was the worst defeated man she ever saw—that he went to his room and had no more to say. It is one thing for a man to know that his religion is on trial, and quite another thing to be tried when he doesn't know he is on trial. The old captain was always my friend after that. If I had yielded to my temper, he would have thought he had gained a great victory for infidelity.

I was severely attacked with bilious fever while holding a meeting in the fork of Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers. I was at the home of a well-to-do planter. I told him I was very sick and wanted a doctor. He said the doctor lived at a considerable distance, and it would cost a heavy bill, and that he understood the fever and could manage the case. He began his treatment by giving me ten grains of calomel, which made me very sick all night. The next morning he gave me a large dose of salts; but the fever came up

again, and he gave me another ten grains of calomel, and the next morning another dose of salts. Still the fever continued. He said he must now bleed me. He corded my arm and stuck his lancet in twice, but no blood came. At the third effort he struck the vein, and took about a pint of blood. By this time I was so nearly exhausted that it made but little difference to me whether I lived or died. Under this savage treatment I was confined to my room for about three weeks. The fever finally tapered off into ague and fever. I don't mean by "ague" a chill, but a cyclone that sweeps through flesh, blood, and bones, and shakes up the whole body. To have a swollen, tender spleen and a liver all disordered, and then an ague, is out of all proportion of human suffering. Finally the ague sluffed off into chills and fever, which followed me for months. My spleen was much enlarged, and I determined to shrink it; so I put on a blister as large as my hand, and started thirty miles to my appointment on horseback. The blister drew finely, but caused me much pain while riding. When I reached my appointment, one good old sister got some cabbage leaves, soaked them in warm water, and applied them to the blister. She then used a greasy plaster. The pain gave way under her mode of treatment, and I was enabled once more to sleep.

I spent some time with one of the leading mem-

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bers of the Church and one of the richest men on the circuit. He proposed to let my horse rest and furnish me a black horse of his that would not work. I accepted his kind offer. I was gone for four weeks. While I was away he had taken my horse in midsummer and plowed him. He was skinned before and behind. I sold him for thirty dollars, and out of some money I had left secured another horse. My purse was now about empty. I wrote to my friend with whom I had left my small capital to send me some money. He replied that he had broken, had taken the benefit of the honest debtors' act, and would soon leave the state. I have not heard from him since.

The money I started with was about all spent, my clothes were beginning to look the worse for wear, the little quarterage collected I could not afford to divide. Brother Trussell's wife and children had to be clothed and fed. Upon the whole, in the presence of much wealth among the pious brethren and many friends, I found myself all around in a very dilapidated condition. I began to be humiliated to the last degree. Under such willful indifference and neglect on the part of the Church, I have never been able to divine why I continued to be an itinerant Methodist preacher. I must have been intensely pious or fanatical, or maybe both. My preaching certainly had but a very feeble effect upon the real lives of my hearers. They were not so mean and penurious in

other things. May it not be true that Mr. Wesley and the early Methodist preachers were more to blame for the poverty and humiliation through which they passed than the gospel they preached and the people to whom they preached? Mr. Wesley was preaching against the stall-fed Episcopal preachers, who were provided for in their ministerial indolence by the government, and merely entered the ministry for a living. He made the sacrifices to show the people that he was not preaching for money, but to save their souls. Our old preachers used to play much on that string—that they were not preaching for money, but for souls. Not only they, but their wives and children, bore many burdens. Since the days of the Crusaders, no class of men have practiced more self-denial or borne heavier crosses than the early Methodist preachers of this country.

The year was drawing to a close. Brother Trussell was trying to raise the Conference collections, which only meant the collections for missions and superannuated preachers. The circuit paid for the support of two preachers, one wife, and four children three hundred dollars. They paid brother Trussell two hundred and the junior preacher fifty dollars.

I had an amusing experience with a crusty, rich old bachelor who from some cause disliked Methodist preachers. He lived about midway

on the main road of a long lane. From his piazza he could see the preachers and other travelers at some distance. He had the habit, when he saw a preacher passing, of getting up his little negroes, playing his fiddle, and having a dance on his front piazza in derision of the preacher. He had given me an ovation. I was telling brother Trussell and some other brethren about it, and asked them why they did not stop him. They said he had been treating the preachers that way for years. I proposed to stop him. They promised to give me a fine suit of clothes if I did. Next time when I entered the lane I rode slowly, hoping he would see me, and he did. By the time I reached his gate he was in full blast. I got down, walked in, and introduced myself. I simply remarked that he was having some amusement with the children. He put up his fiddle, ordered off the little half-clad negroes, and invited me to have my horse put up and stay to dinner. I at once accepted his hospitality, said grace at dinner, and treated him in all respects as if he were a gentleman. I invited him to church and bade him good-by, promising to call again. The next Sunday he was on the back seat in the church. What we do to others they will do to us. Few men sink so low as not to recognize good breeding and gentlemanly bearing in others, and especially when exercised toward them. I taught my boys that good breeding and gentlemanly bearing

were a better protection against insult than pistols and knives.

I had some success as a preacher. Brother Trussell was a revivalist, and many were added to the Church.

The next Conference was held at Milledgeville. I left it wiser but poorer than when I went to it. I received many acts of kindness which I still remember. I bore my trials in silence. Maybe if the Church had known more about them it would have shown more sympathy for them. I went to Conference alone. On the way I came to a large creek which had overflowed its banks. As I rode to the edge of the swamp two wild young fellows came up. I turned to one side to let my horse drink, when I saw one of them slip a pistol from his pocket. I held a tight rein. Off went the pistol, and down came the fellow flat on his back in the water. As I passed him I remarked that the gun kicked. It was not his time to laugh. What a man sows he shall reap.

CHAPTER II.

Conference at Milledgeville—Bishop Waugh Presided—
Dr. Janes's Journey to Jacksonville—Incidents on that
Circuit.

THE Conference met at Milledgeville in 1841. Bishop Waugh, from the North, presided. He impressed me as lacking the refinement and culture that his office demanded. He was dogmatic, and seemed to want the Conference to feel that he was bishop. No man is fit for such an office who is not humble under a personal sense of its great responsibility. Dr. Janes was one of the secretaries of the American Bible Society. He was a grand preacher; preached a sermon, text lxiii. 1-6 of the prophecy of Isaiah, which I have never forgotten. He was afterwards one of the bishops of the Northern Church. The Conference did not impress me as did the one held at Macon the previous year. Our strongest men ought always to be appointed to preach at Conference. A Conference is a representative body of men, and the people expect something more than common.

At the close of the Conference I was appointed to the Jacksonville (Fla.) Circuit, a trip of over two hundred miles, which I had to make on horseback. Brother Crumley was my traveling companion the most of the way. Jacksonville was
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then only a village, located on the north side of the St. John's River, just coming into notice as a resort for Northern invalids. St. John's River is an arm of the sea and a beautiful sheet of water. In some places it is four or five miles wide. The land for over a hundred miles on each side is a sand bank covered with saw palmetto. The Indian war was going on in Florida at that time, and had been for several years. Robert S. Wilson, a genuine Irishman, was on the circuit the year before. The soldiers were stationed at Black Creek, about thirty miles west of Jacksonville. That was one of my appointments, and it was thirty miles more across the country to Brandy Branch, another one of my appointments. That was the point of danger. The Indians had gotten after brother Wilson the year before, and came near capturing him. The brethren wanted me to be armed on that route, but I never was. I felt that it was my duty to go; the Lord would take care of me. But I now take a different view. Not that I believe less in the providence of God and his care, but he has appointed me to take care of myself, and when my strength fails then the Lord will do the rest. The Indians left or were driven back, and the people began to return to their homes and wanted preaching. My circuit enlarged until I had about twenty appointments, which I filled in about three weeks. I met a kind reception everywhere. Many of the old

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Spanish families joined the Methodist Church, and, whatever else may be said of Catholics, they know how to treat their preachers. They made good Methodists. What the Catholic Church most needs is religion.

One of my appointments was at Mandarin, one of the most desirable places on the St. John's River. It once had a large orange grove, which was killed to the ground by the frost in 1835. After the war the place was owned by Harriet Beecher Stowe. The whole community about Mandarin was settled by the Spaniards or Minorcans, all Catholics; but many of them, after leaving St. Augustine, became Methodists. Jacksonville had but one small church, and that was a union church where each congregation had its day. When I reached Jacksonville I was in a rather dilapidated condition. After preaching one Sunday morning, a Northern visitor came up and laid down on the book board of the pulpit a handful of money, and before I could thank him turned away. He simply remarked, "You may need it"; and I certainly did. It was not long before I was in funds and had new clothes. I frequently spent a night at the fine home of the richest man in town. While he did not drink, he was an open infidel. His good wife was a "tear-ing-down" Methodist. They lived very unhappily together on account of their religious differences. I am sure I am right when I say that the nearer a

man and his wife are alike in all things the better for both. The husband often went to church. One morning he gave me a sober talk about my future. He said I was getting only one hundred dollars a year, and might not get that—that there was no future for a Methodist preacher. Then he asked me if I had ever read law. I told him I had read Blackstone, etc. He said his boys were grown and gone, and he wanted a young man in his office, and I could board with him and keep his office until I was admitted to the bar. He did not want a reply until I returned, on my next round. When I came, he asked as to my decision. I told him I had not entertained the proposition at all—that I was a preacher, outlook or no outlook. He smiled approvingly, and said no more. Five years after, he was in the legislature, and the Conference was held at Tallahassee. I was to make a missionary address. One of the preachers overheard him invite his friends to go to hear me, remarking that I was the only Christian in Florida; that he had once tried to buy me. I had not the remotest idea that his overture was not in good faith. He did not want me in his office, but wished to prove to his good wife that there was no truth in religion and no sincerity in her young preacher. How important that we be always on our guard! We never know at what point the devil will make a flank movement upon us.

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Brewer's Neck was a delightful community, made up of Spanish and French families, who were there before the change of flags. They all became Methodists under the preaching of our missionary who went into that community.

I was anxious to see the ocean. Colonel Brewer soon got up a party of young men and ladies to go down to the island. We reached there by moonlight. I was up early and on the east side of the island, waiting on the beach for sunrise. I soon saw the golden edge of the sun as he came up amid the wide waste of water and slowly ascended the steep horizon. I had never before witnessed such a sublime manifestation of God in nature, nor do I know that I ever have since. When in Key West, I often sat in the piazza to behold a tropical sunset. To see the sun melt away in the waves of the ocean and throw back his loving rays upon the sky he has left, is indeed a sublime scene. "Oh, may I triumph so when all my warfare is past!"

I sold many books—"Clarke's Commentary," "Watson's Institutes," and "Fletcher's Checks." The people seemed anxious to know more about the real doctrines of the Methodist Church. I wish the Church had more of that spirit now.

I found the people of that part of Florida a very different class from what I had expected. My circuit extended to King's Ferry, on the St. Mary's River, the dividing line between Georgia

and Florida. I often preached to the negroes, but never but once did I see native Africans just landed from Africa. They looked very different from the native Southern negroes. They had low foreheads, all covered with wool, and hardly any nose at all. The overseer said they would steal everything they could lay their hands on, and that the lash was the only way to control them. Slavery did wonders for the negro—especially if we allow the Radical party and Abolition pulpits to be the judges. In two or three generations it brought the negro from the jungles of Africa up to the highest civilization and enfranchisement in one of the most enlightened nations of the world. It prepared the negro for a seat in Congress. The Abolition pulpit and Radical party ought to glorify slavery that could do such wonders in so short a time. But their conduct toward the Southern whites is simply infamous, and ought to be execrated by all decent, right-thinking men.

I left the circuit, and the preacher and presiding elder were paid. Up to that time I had not taken a collection, but had the money to pay out of my own pocket. I had a dislike to taking up a collection. Brother Trussell attended to the collections the year before. I will say here, for the honor of the Church, that when pastor I have always been paid what the Church promised. We built several churches and added many to the membership. That was a year of more lights

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than shadows. I could do nothing in St. Augustine, our church house having been sold, about which I will say more farther on. I had a pleasant trip to Savannah, where our next Conference was to be held.

CHAPTER III.

Conference Held in Savannah—Incidents on Irwin Circuit.

THE Conference met at Savannah in 1843. I was kindly entertained at the home of brother Heidt, father of Dr. Heidt. The doctor had not come yet. If he had, he was too small for me at this late day to remember, although I have known him for many years since, and never knew anything of him but good and hard work for God and the Church. May the Lord spare him a long time yet to work in his vineyard! Brother Heidt was a man of fine personal appearance. He had all the Christian graces, without seeming to know it. I have long remembered him and his good family. The Conference was held in the Methodist church, an old wooden building. The Church was not strong in Savannah, although it had some sterling members.

All my class, eighteen in number, were present. Among them were Judge Longstreet, Daniel Curry (who left the South and went North when the Church was divided), Myers, Jackson, Captain Martin, and others who became men of prominence. They are all gone, and I feel "like one who treads alone some banquet hall deserted."

I was ordained deacon at that Conference, and

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I supposed, after my year's success and prosperity on the Jacksonville Circuit, that I would be stationed; but, to my surprise and mortification, I was read out to the Irwin Circuit, one of the poorest appointments at that time in the old Georgia Conference. It joined the Telfair Circuit on the south side of the Oconee River. Brother Trussell had traveled it, and told me all about his trials and tribulations. The circuit reached from Mobley Bluff to the Okefenokee Swamp; a round of about two hundred and fifty miles, to be traveled in three weeks. The most of the people then lived by raising stock. I reached the circuit in company with several other preachers, and after traveling some distance through it the outlook was so gloomy that for the first and last time in my long life I shed tears over my future prospects. There were many good, kind families on the circuit. Everybody was hospitable in those days, whether he had much or little. I went round the circuit. The congregations were meager. All the church houses were small log cabins, and the seats were benches without backs. The people were nearly all dressed in homespun. The most of them lived in single shanties without shed room. Some of these had no floors. They cooked, ate, and slept all in the same room. Some families had lived that way for years. The whole country was a vast plain of long-leaf pine forest. Sometimes the settlements

were ten miles apart, but other parts were thickly settled.

I have always been hopeful and looked on the bright side, although the clouds might be dark; but, after going round the circuit, my faith and hope could not see any bright side to it. It was a great trial to me when I gave up all to become an itinerant preacher; but now came another and as great trial, when I was about to make up my mind to leave the ministry. The devil had made a flank movement upon me. I owed nothing to the Church. I had no relations in it. It had never done anything for me, except to furnish me a place to work, and the first year of my itinerant life had not paid half my expenses. That the bishop and my presiding elder had either neglected me or put me on that circuit to punish me, for I knew not what, seemed evident. But before leaving I felt it was due to Christ, myself, and the circuit (which was not to blame for my being there) that I give the subject sober thought, and if I left to leave with a clear conscience. I rose up and went away to the woods, seated myself on a log, and opened up the discussion. The first question was, Had I ever been converted, and was the gospel true? This I could not deny. Then came next, Was I really called to preach Christ's gospel? I had from a boy felt it my duty to preach. Then came the issue, If Christ were there, and had to preach to those poor peo-

ple, would he grumble and complain at his lot? Now came the humiliating and stinging question, Are you not backslidden? This brought me to my knees, and I called myself up to be prayed for. Before I finished praying, heaven and earth came together. When my presiding elder came he told me I was put on that work because he thought me suited to build it up. My congregations increased and revival power came down. Scores were added to the Church. Many Baptist children joined the Church, and I immersed them, lest they should quit the Methodist Church on account of their baptism. I was more elastic in those days, on some lines, than I am now. There were many Primitive Baptist preachers in the bounds of the circuit. There were no Missionary Baptists. The Church had not been divided. Those good old faithful Primitives could not stand seeing Baptist children going into the Methodist Church; and instead of coming into line with the revival and building up their churches, they opened up doctrinal hostilities all around the circuit, until finally one of the leading preachers, brother P., challenged me to a public debate on the "Five Points," the distinctive doctrines between Calvinism and Methodism of that day. I accepted the challenge, and appointed brother Henderson, a good local preacher, to arrange the details by my next round. When I returned the Baptist brethren decided that broth-

er P. could not meet me, but that I was a true man, and they would trust me to discuss both sides of the doctrine. I accepted the position without once thinking of the ludicrous light in which it would place me. They ought not to have placed my purity under so severe a strain. Unless I had just come fresh from the skies, and not from the conflict of controversy, I would not accept such a position now, from the plain fact that it would place me in false relations to my Baptist brethren, although I might know more about their doctrines than they do. The Sabbath was appointed for the discussion at Pady Creek Church, and it was published far and wide. All parties assembled, and there was a crowd. The living scenes of that day will never be put on paper. I will only tax the reader with a few of the arguments on the final pre-severance of the saints and the possibility of final apostasy. That was the main doctrine in dispute in that day. I was to prove, in the first place, from the Bible and sound argument, that a saint could not finally fall from grace.

I will only refer to some of the arguments used on that side of the question. If I defended the doctrines of the Baptists I must use the scriptures they relied upon to prove their dogma. One of their strong texts is this: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present,

nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." I showed that the Christian armor was the strongest in earth or heaven; that God had put into their hands the longest-range gun that heaven had ever forged, proof against angels or any other creature; that principalities and powers might wage war against the saints in vain. In the parable of the Shepherd and the Sheep the Saviour said: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Another text: "I in the Father, and you in me." This I compared to three barrels, and the smaller one in the center environed with the Father and the Son, the life of the saint hid with Christ in God. I referred to the leaven hid in the three measures of meal until the whole lump was leavened—the human and divine made one. I used many other scriptures and arguments to prove the final perseverance of the saints and the impossibility of their finally falling away and being lost.

The Baptist brethren seemed much elated, while the Methodists looked crestfallen. I noticed brother Henderson, a very intelligent man, who sat on my right and looked as vacant as if there was nothing to see, while his good little shouting Methodist wife looked as if her young

preacher had gone clean over to the Baptists and all was lost for the Methodists.

Now came the other side, in which I was to prove from the Bible and fair argument that the saints could fall from grace and be lost. I must now reply to my own arguments. I could find scripture upon scripture to prove that both men and angels had fallen; but that would only be to array scripture against scripture, and leave both parties to take choice between which scripture each one might accept. Therefore, I was obliged to prove that the scriptures I had quoted and the arguments I had made did not mean what the Baptist brethren thought they did and what I had proved, or attempted to prove, they did. I showed, in the first place, that with all the great promises recorded in the Bible for the defense of the saints there was not a single text that said the saints could not destroy themselves. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself!" If there was no danger of the saints falling, why these great and precious promises? If no danger, why those long-range guns and immense fortifications of divine help? If the saints amid the conflicts of life, were only on dress parade, they were in no danger. A gun, whatever may be its destructive capacity, is useless and harmless when not used by the gunner. What protection was Saul's armor? David stole his spear while he was asleep and cut off the skirt of his coat. I

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took up the comparison of the three barrels, and asked my Baptist brethren if I could get to the middle one and get it out on scriptural principles, would they admit that the saint might fall. They gave their assent by a nod of the head. I turned over to Revelation and read: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." "Now," said I, "I don't say they were never converted, for if they were not in his mouth, he could not spew out of his mouth what was not in his mouth." I took up the parable of the Shepherd and the Sheep. I said in the beginning there were but two sheep, but I would not discuss their fall (for all admitted they fell); but our Baptist brethren held that a sheep was always a sheep, and a goat was always a goat. "Now," said I, "if I can turn a goat into a sheep, then will you not admit that a sheep may turn to a goat?" There was no response. I then showed that the Baptist, Methodist, and all orthodox Churches held that all children were born sinners, and therefore goats; that there had never been born into the world a child with a lock of wool on his back. Then where did the Baptist Church get its flock of sheep from, if it did not make them out of goats? and if conversion did not turn a goat into a sheep, why convert him at all? If always a sheep, he did not need conversion. Did they never hear of a sheep leaving

the fold and going astray and being caught by the wolf? If there were no wolves, the sheep would need no shepherd. The fact that there is a Saviour is a demonstration that men have fallen and sinned. I solved the leaven in the meal with the baker. That dough was not bread, and however well it might rise, if not baked it would fall and sour, and ruin meal and leaven.

After the meeting closed I heard a Methodist ask the good old deacon what he thought of it. He replied that I was a dangerous man in the state and would be heard from; that a man who could turn a goat into a sheep and a sheep into a goat, as I had done, was a dangerous man, and he did not wish to have anything more to do with me. The news went around the circuit that I had utterly demolished the "Five Points." The brethren at Yellow Bluff Church, some twenty miles away, expressed anxiety to hear me on the "Five Points." I consented to preach on the subject. In the morning before preaching time in stepped brother H., a tall, bony Baptist preacher, who informed me that he had walked a long way to reply to me on that occasion. I told him that he had not studied the subject and was not prepared to discuss it, and that I would not debate with him. He took it kindly, and asked me to announce him for the next Sunday, when he would answer me. I announced him. There was a good local preacher in the neighborhood.

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He was red-headed, and had a thin skin and long, beaked nose. Brother H. opened up with his reply. He quoted me as saying a man might get religion to-day and lose it to-morrow—that Peter fell in one night. “Now,” said he, “suppose a man should be converted to-day and go to the borough to-morrow and be overcome by the influence of his friends, and on his way home he should lie down and go to sleep, and a rattlesnake should bite him and kill him, what would become of him? I say, what would become of him?” Our local preacher replied that he would go to hell, because he would die drunk. Brother H. said he was in a free country, and would not allow himself to be disturbed. Brother G. said he had not interrupted him—that he had only answered a plain question; whereupon brother H. called him a liar, and brother G. advanced upon him; but the brethren interposed, taking H. out at one door and G. out at the other. This ended the discussion on the “Five Points” on that circuit.

The brethren then took up the mode of baptism, which I did not discuss much. I remember having baptized at one time seventeen grown-up people in Twenty-mile Creek.

Squire Martin, one of the most prominent citizens in his district, was converted, and wanted me to baptize him as John the Baptist baptized the Saviour, which I promised to do on my next

round. It was published all abroad that I was to baptize Squire Martin in the way the Saviour was baptized. The ceremony was to take place at the Allapaha River. The bridge and banks of the river were lined with interested spectators. I took the squire into the river about knee-deep, and he knelt down in the water up to his waist, and I used a pitcher and poured the water upon his head in the name of the Trinity. Thus I baptized him in the river with water, but not under the water.

We built a model camp ground. It was in the richest but most immoral part of the circuit. There were several professional gamblers. Gamblers were not looked upon at that time as they are now. Georgia was once full of gamblers. The presiding elder declared if I had the camp ground located at that point he would not attend it without the presence of a justice of the peace and the sheriff. I told him I would be personally responsible for the good order on the ground. When the meeting opened I told the congregation that we had the best preaching place the country afforded, with plenty of room for all and good open pasture for their stock, and if any one misbehaved I would tie him to one of the arbor posts. I never witnessed better behavior in any camp ground. Brother Peck preached on gambling, and got the different games badly confused and mixed. The gamblers called him a fool. I

asked him to announce me for three o'clock. The gamblers would go out to hear me. Some of them tented on the ground. I announced as my text a part of the parable of the Prodigal Son: "Not many days after, he gathered all together and took his journey into a far country." I announced that my text included the progressive nature and hellward tendency of sin. I soon got the boy to where he began to take his first lessons in gambling, and noted his progress until I left him hanging on the gallows. The leading gambler said it was the best sermon on gambling he ever heard, and proposed to give me a fine suit of clothes. A man ought never to preach about what he knows nothing of.

Late Sunday night a gang of boys and young men called for me at the preachers' tent. I inquired what they wanted. They said they had nowhere to sleep, and they were afraid they would misbehave and get tied to an arbor post. I went around and got up some bedclothes and made a bed in the altar. The next morning the altar was full, and all had been quiet during the night.

There was on the camp ground an educated, sober, wealthy atheist, with his wife and daughter. He came to me and said he would tent the next year. I told him I was glad of it. He replied that he was not converted, but that a camp meeting was a great civilizer and social blessing; that he had seen men there well dressed and be-

having like gentlemen whom he had never seen behave so anywhere else. He was a graduate of the South Carolina College, and had married the daughter of its infidel president. One morning soon after the meeting, his wife told him she was converted, and that religion was true. It produced the deepest conviction upon his mind. He came to see me, and asked me to pray for him. I told him that he had forgotten more than I knew. He replied: "Pray to the God whose existence I have denied a thousand times. All I can say is, 'God give me what I need!'" He was converted, and became a faithful, humble member of the Church.

Captain W. was a prominent citizen. About a week before the meeting I invited him and his family to attend the meeting. He scouted the idea that he would allow his wife and daughters to spend a night at a camp meeting; but they came, and he left his wife, but returned home himself to look after his plantation. His sister—a lovely woman, one of the purest and best Christians—came to me with tears in her eyes, and asked me to meet her at sundown at a throne of grace and help her pray for her brother Tom. I promised her I would. His brother-in-law came to me and said that if I would go to the captain in the congregation he would go to the altar. I hesitated, but went. I took his hand; it was cold, and he looked as if he were at the judgment

seat. He went with me to the altar, and remained until a late hour. He then went home, but returned the next morning to join the Church; but the meeting was closed. He remained under this deep and powerful conviction at home for days, when he was happily converted. He called in his negroes, confessed his wrongs to them, and asked their forgiveness. He was one of the most thoroughly changed men I ever knew. He has been in the legislature many years, and still leads a Christian life.

There lived near the camp ground a Dutchman who, though of sober habits, was a very desperate man. He had a serious difficulty with his neighbor about their stock, and had sworn vengeance against him. I met the Dutchman one evening. He was in tears, and seemed deeply convicted. He said he would not kill his neighbor, and asked me if I thought it was religion that had gotten hold of him. I told him it looked like it. "Well," said he, "if it is, I will make friends with P. Do you really think it is religion that has got hold of me?" I told him it certainly was. "Well," said he, "I will make friends with P. anyhow." He was converted, and made a good member of the Church. That camp ground was a power for good for years in that community. A camp meeting, properly managed, is a great blessing to any people.

I had now reached the age when I was an ex-

pert in family government, and especially in rearing children. On one occasion a good sister with four children came to church, made a pallet for them near the pulpit, and gave them food. The children gave her some trouble and annoyed me. At last I told her if she would whip them at home and make them behave, they would not annoy her at church. Her motherly nature could not stand such a reproof from a boy of my age, and she left the church. On reaching the door she turned on me, and said she hoped I would have a dozen children. It was six years before I married, but our first child took out of me my great wisdom on rearing children, and up to the tenth one I never got it back. I had the idea that a child was like a piece of cloth that might be cut out to fit any pattern; but our first one proved to me that a child was a queer thing, and that the parents could only do their best, and then they would do badly enough.

The year was now drawing to a close, and the brethren determined to pay up all the claims. They requested me to take a collection at Meeks's Church. I had never taken up a collection. I paid my collections out of my own pocket. It was my last round, and I had preached my valedictory and had a good congregation. I then started for the collection. I asked brother Taylor to raise the tune. He struck on a high key. The happiest man I ever knew was one who

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begged the most. His soul was full of glory and the Holy Ghost. "And to begging I will go, and to begging I will go!" I felt extremely humiliated that I was a beggar. Church dismissed, and now to count the collection. It amounted to seventy-five cents in cash! That was the first and last valedictory I ever preached. I saw they did not pay. Strange that with such a beginning I should have been general agent twelve years of my life. We don't know what we can do until we are tried.

The presiding elder ordered me to go to the Taylor camp meeting. On my way I went huckleberry hunting, and tore a piece out of the knee part of my trousers. We wore in those days the broad folds, and I cut a scrap and mended the hole. I asked for a very hot iron to press the patch. When I lifted the iron I found that I had burned out its whole size. Then I was in a fix! It was twenty miles back to my clothes. The good old sister came to my relief with a new pair of her husband's trousers of homemade jeans and dyed as green as grass. Rather than go back I accepted the offer, and went on to the camp meeting in the green breeches. We had a glorious meeting, and I was very happy. The last Sabbath evening the presiding elder came to me and said I must preach that night the last sermon of the meeting. I remonstrated, saying I had preached and others had not. He replied that

the people thought no one could preach but me. That closed the argument, and the devil made a flank movement upon me. I said to myself: "If they think I have preached, I will show them to-night how I can preach on the text, 'Thy kingdom come,' in reference to Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation of it." I had gone but a few steps in the sermon before I saw there was no fitness in the discourse and the occasion, or the uneducated people I was trying to instruct. Darkness soon not only covered the whole face of the deep, but it was all dark above and around. I tried to stop, but could find no place where I could close. At last I broke off abruptly and sat down. A local preacher got up and sang a song and invited the mourners. I felt like going up as a mourner, but thought it might have a bad effect upon the service. I knelt in the pulpit as a mourner, and as soon as the prayer was over I left for the preachers' tent. I got another preacher's saddlebags and a quilt. The tent had the seats pushed back. I crawled under the seats, lay down on the quilt, and placed the preacher's saddlebags under my head. Many inquiries were made for me, but no one knew where I was, and I did not want them to know. After awhile brother Mills made a search for his saddlebags, and at last looked under the seats and found me. They opened the way and pulled me out. That was the first and last time in my long

life that I entered the pulpit to show myself, and the last time I preached from "Thy kingdom come." It was several days before I got over it.

Years after, I was presiding elder on the St. Mary's District. At a dining to which my young wife was invited one of the sisters said she heard her husband say, I had come out more than any man he had known; that the first time he saw me I had on the greenest breeches he ever saw. My wife resented it. Some years later, a young man presented himself to join the Conference. He came to me and said I was very differently dressed from what I was when he saw me at Taylor's Camp Ground; that I had on the greenest breeches he ever saw. I told him I had outgrown them, but if he had once been in them he would still be in them. Detraction seems to be a part of man's natural depravity.

The Conference year was now coming to a close. I had preached my last time at many places. At one I had performed the marriage ceremony, and after supper offered to preach. Some of the company wanted to play; but I determined to preach. Many from a distance were at the wedding, and there was no room for them. They had to spend the night as best they could. I was at the upper end of the circuit when the news reached me that a report had been circulated that at the wedding I was too familiar with some of the sisters. I was very much outraged at such

a report, which I knew had no foundation in my conduct. I determined to defend my character, and at once sent an appointment back to the nearest church. It was about thirty-five miles away. Brother Henderson, a local preacher, sympathized with my movement, and consented to go back with me. We had a late start and went a near route, and got lost and lay out all night in the woods without fire. I preached the next Sabbath, as appointed. The community was out. After preaching I saw many persons in the congregation who were at the wedding. I called upon them to testify to my innocence by rising. More than a dozen rose up. The man who had circulated the slander came up with tears in his eyes and said he was only joking as an offset to my preaching at a wedding. I saw it was all a mere farce ; but now I had to ride thirty-five miles back. I then determined I would never again ride seventy miles and lie out in the woods looking after my character, but would let it look after itself. It has never given me any more trouble.

The circuit more than paid in full all the claims upon it. This was one of the most prosperous and happy years of my long life, and I have never complained about another appointment, although I have received more than fifty. I can say that was one of the best, now that my work is done.

CHAPTER IV.

The Conference in Columbus—The Methodist Church Divided—The Georgia Conference Divided—The Florida Conference Organized.

THE Conference of 1844 met in Columbus. Bishop Soule presided. He was a great natural man, of fine personality, and presided with great dignity. He was a forcible preacher. Although born North, when the Church divided he adhered to the Church, South. The preachers *en masse* had changed the long-tailed overcoat for the long circular cloak. It was an interesting sight to see a hundred men all dressed in long black circular cloaks as they marched to the Conference. I regret that the long circular cloak was ever given up. During the Conference the ladies of Columbus gave the preachers an ovation in a fine dinner. The Conference was never all to meet again. Brother Duncan, the inimitable singer, was called on for a song. He sang the verses, "When shall we all meet again?" It was a soul-stirring scene, which I have never forgotten. They have now all passed away, and I am left alone, but I hope to see them again in the great Conference that meets beyond the flood. What our work will be there, I do not know. If faithful here, we shall be made rulers over many

things there. If I had a thousand lives with my long life, I would give them all to God as a Methodist preacher. I know them to be the most benevolent, purest, best men on earth, after an intimate personal acquaintance of sixty years.

I was appointed to the Blakely Circuit, which reached from Fort Gaines to the junction of the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers. This was a year of manifold lights and but few shadows. One of the great poets said he never saw but nine cloudless days; and it is said of an old Indian (and Indians are close observers of the skies) that he never saw but thirteen cloudless days.

Southwestern Georgia was being rapidly settled at that time. The river-bottom lands were much in demand, and many Middle Georgians and South Carolinians settled on the Chattahoochee River. Judge Saffold owned a plantation. Blakely, the county seat, was largely dominated by the Baptists. The country, as a whole, was mostly Methodist. The preacher was at home among such fine families as the Prestons, Hutchinsons, Crawfords, Shackelfords, Hayeses, and Coachmans. Many were added to the Church. It was a two weeks' circuit with six appointments. I was in the habit of making my home with a very nice family. Father, sons, and daughter were all members of the Church. The old lady, though one of the neatest of housekeepers, was

not a member of any Church. She said and did as suited her. On one occasion she met me in my room and saluted me by saying she never saw the day when she would have married a Methodist preacher, to be dragged about over the country from place to place. I told her I had never seen the day when I would have married such a woman as she was; that she was wicked, and abused everybody and everything, and often mortified her husband and children by the way she denounced the Church. She said that I should not talk to her so in her own house, and I could leave. I told her she was an old lady and I was a young man and a gentleman; that I was talking to her as a preacher. She finally broke down, and said she was a poor old sinner, and asked me to pray for her. I then tried to comfort her. I told her God was merciful; that he would not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. On my next round she joined the Church, in which she remained faithful unto death. For three years my saddlebags had been my wardrobe and library. This year I bought an old-fashioned sulky, which was a decided improvement. I could carry a small trunk behind and enlarge my wardrobe and library.

That year the great Methodist Church was divided, and it brought sadness to my heart. Young as I was, I thought I could see the gathering storm. I loved the whole Church and the

whole country. I wish I could have the national, patriotic feeling I once had, and the love for Northern Methodists I once felt. But these feelings have melted away in the fires of strife, never to return.

Several of the older preachers went to the Florida Conference: P. P. Smith, John Yarbrough, Reuben H. Tucker, and Thomas Benning, the latter a courtly man, whose passions were stronger than his piety; and he was wrecked on that dangerous coast where so many fine vessels have been stranded. Such are the direct relations between a preacher and his flock that some crimes he must not commit. The pastoral duties of a preacher are the most delicate and difficult he has to perform. Once a preacher's character is tainted in any way, his usefulness is impaired for life.

I left the Blakely Circuit with many regrets, for I had made many lifelong friends there. The Florida Conference extended across southern Georgia from Fort Gaines to Mobley Bluff on the Ocmulgee River, and down the Oconee to the Altamaha, embracing all of middle, east, and south Florida. We had only about thirty preachers to cultivate this large territory. The south Georgia part now composes much of the South Georgia Conference.

Bishop Soule presided at the Florida Conference, held in Tallahassee. Dr. Tippet, the agent for the Book Concern, then in New York, was

present. He was a noble-looking Christian gentleman, who still hoped the Church, on a second sober thought, would not divide. My sympathies were with him, for I still hoped the Church would remain united. He preached a grand sermon. While he was preaching, for the first time I saw a Methodist preacher cheered by the congregation. The whole assembly applauded him.

I was appointed to the St. Augustine Mission, a very injudicious and hopeless appointment. We had no church, and but one poor old woman for a member. There were several fine families from South Carolina, and especially from Virginia, who were Methodists. Except one family, all went to the Episcopal Church. They were mostly in the service of the United States Government, and did all they could to discourage me. I rented a small room, where I preached to a small congregation. Years after I was in Virginia, when the pastor of the First Methodist Church informed me that those people were well-known members of that Church; that Major V.'s wife was the leading woman in the Church, and a great shouter. Dr. —, who never entered my little place of worship, was an exhorter; with other prominent members. If there ever was a time for Methodists to help their Church and preacher, that was the time. The Virginian's report gave me a supreme contempt for those people, which remains until this writing.

The Presbyterians had a large brick church, and Dr. Mack, from Boston, who was there for his health, was their pastor. He invited me to preach. I, without consideration, preached on holiness, which gave him very great offense. I told the congregation that sin was not a necessity, etc. When he closed by prayer, he told the Lord that he who said he was without sin was a liar, and the truth was not in him. I took it all kindly; but it stirred up his entire church, and his prayer gave mortal offense to one of his elders, who told him that if the doctrines I had preached were not the doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, he believed what I preached; and that he was no longer a Presbyterian, and called for his letter. They labored faithfully with him, but finally gave him his letter, and I received him into the Methodist Church. He was a great help to me, but was much troubled about his wife and two daughters, who were stanch Catholics. He asked my advice. I told him to let his wife's religion alone; that he married her body, and not her soul, but to outlive them. That he said he could not do. They went every morning at 5 o'clock to mass, and fasted or abstained every Friday—only ate hominy and eggs. I told him when they got up at 5 o'clock for him to get up at 4, and when they ate hominy and eggs for him to eat the hominy and leave out the eggs.

I preached at Newnansville one night about

three years afterwards. While I was preaching a very nice Spanish-looking old lady shouted very gracefully. After preaching brother Campbell came to greet me. I asked him if he knew the lady who shouted so gracefully. He replied that she was his wife. I then asked him if all were Methodists. He replied that he got them all, but it liked to have killed him. The best way to proselyte is by living a better life.

The Indian war was about closed. St. Augustine had been for years an important military station, but as soon as the troops were removed the place was left almost desolate.

Jacksonville had become a popular resort for invalids from the North. The old town still had several thousands left, mostly of the old Minorcan and Spanish inhabitants. They were all Catholics. I had prayed for grace and divine help and direction, but all was dark. There was no light—no sun by day nor moon by night.

Dr. Mack and some American Episcopalians were disposed to ridicule the idea of my building a church. They said that I, like the fool in the gospel, was talking about building without counting the cost. This was too much for my Methodist pride to stand. I replied that the Methodists had the men and the money to build all the churches they needed, and were not at all dependent upon Catholics, Presbyterians, or Episcopalians. This made me determined to build a

church, but I had not counted the cost. I went aboard the first vessel that sailed for Charleston, without credentials or letters. I had never been to sea. The most of the passengers were Catholics, and on the Sabbath while we were out at sea they all seemed to be devout in the morning; but after dinner they made up a purse and raffled for it. One of the party came to me and offered me a chance for my church, free. I told him the Methodist Church begged, but need not gamble. He seemed surprised that I would not accept a free chance to get the prize. When I came in full view of Charleston, with its church domes and tall steeples, my courage failed me, and I shrank back. I felt that I was too small a man to tackle such a large job. I knew personally but one man in the city, and that was Dr. Wightman, the editor of our Church paper. I took my valise and went to his office and laid my cause before him. He said that they had recently built two new churches and were deeply in debt, and he did not think I could get any help in Charleston. He advised me to go to the villages in the interior. The camp meeting, which was a grand affair, was to come off in a few days. I decided to go there and try my luck, but met with no encouragement until I found brother Jest. I mention his name because he helped me. He gave me ten dollars, and told me to let the Methodists alone and take the street. He said that the citizens of

Charleston would help. Take the streets in a strange city! How could I do it? I had a natural aversion to asking people for money among those I knew, and how could I approach men I did not know or who did not know me? But this was the only way open unless I gave up the enterprise, which I would gladly have done if I were not compelled to go back to St. Augustine to be ridiculed. I took the street day in and day out until I got about two hundred and seventy-five dollars. This encouraged me to go on. I went to Columbus and collected about one hundred and fifty dollars more. Then I went to Newberry, where I was born; but here the people and things were changed. When I left, there was no Methodist church there; now they had a large frame church. I preached on the Sabbath to a large congregation. General Kinard told me that nearly everybody in the congregation was kin to me. They had married and intermarried until all were kinsfolk. I had a most delightful time for a few days. I left and came over to Augusta. Brother Lewis, a grand, pure man, was pastor. I preached about a week for him, and the good people gave me some two hundred dollars. They were richer then perhaps than they are now.

I went from there to Sparta and over to Milledgeville, then the capital of the state, and from there to Columbus. Brother J. E. Evans was then stationed in Columbus, and in the midst of a

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glorious revival. I spent several days with him, and preached for him. They gave me a good collection. I went from there to Savannah. There I had to take the street again, but raised over three hundred dollars. I went to Macon. Brother Samuel Anthony was pastor—the salt of the earth and the light of the world. I went back to Savannah, and from there to St. Augustine with over fifteen hundred dollars in cash.

I secured a lot and contracted to have the church built out of shell stone and plastered. The contractor was a shrewd Yankee. My contract exceeded my means about seven hundred dollars, but I thought I could raise it. He insisted that if I did not raise it I must daily pay five dollars more until all was paid, and if he did not finish the building by a given time he was to deduct five dollars a day until the house was completed. This bound me to raise the balance of the money, which I determined to do. This brought me into the open field again to get help; but with some experience I had gained in midsummer, I started out westward on my second tour. We had to hack it all the way from St. Augustine two hundred miles across the sandy country. The sand and dust, I soon saw, would ruin my new clothes. I went into a Jew store and bought a suit of checked homespun for about one dollar and a half, put it on, and did not stop except for food and lodging until I reached Monticello. The

church was not plastered nor painted, and I decided not to ask the members for aid. The Baptists had been holding a meeting for several days. I went around to their prayer meeting dressed as I was. I sat near the door, for I knew no one. Toward the close of the meeting the leader asked me to come up and take part in the service. I did not know why, for I was a very unclerical-looking man. In the meantime in came an old friend, an elder in the Presbyterian Church, a lawyer, whom I knew in Jacksonville. He insisted on my preaching, as it was a sort of opinion meeting. He influenced the Baptist minister to ask me to preach. I accepted the invitation, changed my garb, and preached. When the service ended the preacher decided to close his meeting. On the impulse I announced to the congregation that if they would meet me the next night at the Methodist church I would preach for them. The church was crowded. While I was preaching a strange power, such as I had never felt before, came upon me. It was not a baptism of the Spirit nor any sudden great joy, but a peaceful sense, which pervaded my whole soul, that I had power both with God and man. We had a grand meeting. About fifty were added to the Church.

I had a fine meeting on my way to Fort Gaines. When I reached Eufaula, one of Alabama's best towns in that day, I stopped with a prominent Methodist lawyer. He had heard of my meeting

at Fort Gaines, and wanted me to begin a meeting that night. I told him he could not get me a congregation. He said he would get the congregation if I would preach. After dinner a boy went around with a bell and an advertisement that I would preach that night. The idea of being auctioned off was something new to me. After preaching several nights, the brethren decided not to give me a collection. One of the old stewards, and a banker, said he supposed if they refused me a collection I would not preach for them any more. I told him he was mistaken. I would not be as mean as they were. I would continue to preach and do them all the good I could, collection or no collection. The old gentleman hesitated. Said he, "We will give you a collection," and they gave me about one hundred and sixty dollars.

I attended several camp meetings. That same quiet assurance remained. I swept everything before me when I preached. Hundreds were converted, some of whom live to this day. I visited Montgomery, which was only a small town at that time. I then went to Greensboro. I obtained all the money I needed, but now had to stage it four hundred miles. My strange power seemed to linger with me, and I thought when I reached St. Augustine I would take the town into my new church; but when I arrived there my power was gone. I went around to the new

church. It was a neat building, forty by sixty feet, built of shell rock, and rough-coated; but there were no seats and no pulpit in it.

The day the contract was due I called on the contractor and told him I was ready to receive the church and settle with him. The next day the house was full of workmen, and for about ten days they were at it early and late. The contractor was caught in his own trap for about sixty dollars. The people of St. Augustine never paid one dollar for that church. I had learned that during the war the church, by some means, got out of our hands. I wrote to the preachers about it, but never received a reply. I built the church and paid for it myself, and it belongs to the Southern Methodist Church. The old cathedral was still standing there, with a cement floor and chime of bells. Scores of persons afflicted with throat and lung diseases visited St. Augustine every winter. It is one of the healthiest spots on the American continent, winter or summer.

There was an old Methodist brother from Jersey City who boarded in the same private house with me. They were Northern people. He and the negro servant were quarreling all the time. He was one of the wealthiest merchants in Jersey City. He said he had been a great friend of the negro, but if he ever got back North he would use his influence to free the Southern whites from slavery to the negroes. It is still a debatable

question who are the freedmen—the negroes or the whites.

That was one of the eventful years of my itinerant life. It brought me experiences I never had before. My travels around did not enlarge me so much in my own estimation as they lessened others of whom I had heard much. If you want a great man to continue great, don't come too near him. A man must be a very great man if he still remains great when you come near him.

CHAPTER V.

Conference at Monticello—Two Eventful Years on the
Island of Key West—Churches Destroyed and Rebuilt
—On a Collecting Tour—Temperance—The Negroes
—Converting a Gambler.

THE Conference of 1845 was held in Monticello. Bishop Andrew presided. Nothing of special interest occurred during the Conference. Bishop Andrew often attended the Florida Conference, and was loved by preachers and people. To my astonishment, I was appointed to Key West Station. Brother Graham, of California memory, was stationed there the year before, and gave me a very unfavorable account of his ministry on the island. He told me there were thirty-two grog-shops there, and that he had encountered many difficulties. The whisky men had threatened to wash him, which meant to tie a rope around his waist and shoulders and from the wharf to cast him into the water and then haul him in, and then cast him out again. It is a terrible ordeal to put a man through. He eluded their grasp by taking refuge on the boat that brought him over. He suffered many other indignities that were heaped upon him during the year. His church building was a small unceiled structure twenty by thirty feet. His flock was composed of Wesleyan Methodists from the

West India Islands. There was but one American among them, and the more I thought over the treatment he had received, the more indignant I became. The devil made a flank movement on my piety and consecrated life, until I felt that if I ever heard of any attempt to "wash" me they would smell fire and brimstone. I resolved that I would wipe up the earth with the first man that insulted me. The devil had got complete control of me.

We shipped from St. Mark's in a full-rigged brig. The distance across the gulf to Key West was over four hundred miles. Our captain was a herculean Methodist in word, but with this his life had little to do. We had a French Jesuit priest on board who spoke broken English. We were becalmed for several days. Eight days were required for the voyage. About the third day the priest became very sick, and I went to the captain and told him the priest was a very sick man and needed medicine. The captain replied that he had not called on him for any medicine, let him die and they would feed him to the sharks. I told the captain that the priest was a man, and that common humanity demanded that we do something for him, and to give me the keys to the medicine chest and I would doctor him. The captain handed me the keys, and I went to the berth where the priest was lying in great pain. I told him I would give him some

medicine. He looked at me very intently, as if he had some suspicion, but said, "I will take your medicine." I doctored him for about two days, got him up and gave him some good chicken soup. He turned to me and said, "Doctor, you have cured me, but I am a Jesuit and have no money," having given away all he had; but he had one of the finest eight-bladed pocket-knives I ever saw, which he offered me in payment for my practice upon him. I told him to keep his knife, for I did not charge him anything. When we reached Key West he went around and visited the Catholic families on the island and told them to be good to Dr. Richardson, who had been kind to him; and they were.

I was the only regular preacher on the island. Other preachers were occasionally there, but the Catholics came regularly to my church. When I reached the island I was met by several of the brethren, who kindly conducted me to my boarding place, with one of the best families I ever knew. They held family prayers three times a day. I looked around for trouble, but found none. Everybody was polite and kind to me. I soon began to cool down, and to feel repentance for my sins.

In a few days the judge, lawyers, doctors, and prominent citizens called to see me, a reception I never had before nor have had since. I was invited to the Masonic lodge and chapter, and

made chaplain of both. My little chapel was soon filled with the women, the men standing around outside. This brought prominently before the public mind that I must have a larger church. I collected about four thousand dollars, and from the rock of the island put up and paid for a large stone building; but it was not covered in when that ever-to-be-remembered storm came and prostrated all to the ground, a mass of ruins, and carried my little chapel entirely away, out to sea, and we never saw or heard of it any more. All that was left was the ground upon which it stood. The wind blew for twenty-four hours with sufficient force to sweep down stone and brick buildings. All the vessels dragged anchor, and all houses on the lower streets went out to sea. The lighthouse, with a large stone building and fourteen people, was washed entirely away. We did all we could to protect and save the women and children. We could hear no thunder, but at night the island was like sheets of flame, and trembled to its very foundations. The barracks, about a half mile long, were saved. They were tied with bars of iron; so was one stone residence that stood. The Episcopal church was built of stone, and was blown to pieces. I had done what I could to save others, when about five o'clock in the afternoon I determined to save myself by seeking the highest point upon the island, which was only about

twelve feet above the sea level. When I reached it I could see all around, and there was not a vessel left. The storm was from the south, and with no obstruction between Havana and Key West, it had an open sweep for sixty miles. There were then only about three hundred yards of ground on the island uncovered by the waves, and the wind was direct, bringing the sea over the island. I saw no hope; only an hour more, and the sea would sweep on, and without a shore all would perish. I came face to face with my past life and experience of six years as a preacher. I was not prepared to meet my sermons in the final judgment. I leaned forward on the head of my cane and solemnly promised the Lord if he would save me and the island I would preach the rest of my life that heaven and hell were facts, and that I would faithfully warn the people; which promise I have kept until this day. In a very short time the wind shifted to the southwest, and the island was saved. The great hereafter will tell whether my poor prayer had anything to do with its salvation, or the natural laws. Thirty-seven persons were lost in the storm. Scores were left with only the clothes they had on. Their houses were all gone, and the town of about four thousand population was a complete wreck. This was the condition of affairs in October. I took the lumber and what I could bring from the wreck of the stone church and put up a small building to

preach in, and large enough for my Sunday school.

I was married in 1847. I had been married only a few weeks when the Catholic priest and the Episcopal and Baptist preachers came to the island, and all determined to go to the mainland and collect money to build churches, because of the storm. This was one of the trials of my life. I had the island largely under my control. Many of the best families had joined the Church, but had nothing left after the storm. They were utterly helpless to build, and if those preachers succeeded in building, the people would have to go to their churches, having nowhere else to go. I had spent one of the hardest year's work of my life to make it a Methodist town, and had succeeded far beyond my expectations; but I saw that all was lost, in that still formative state, unless I had a church large enough to hold my congregation together. I had had a hard experience in getting money abroad to build my St. Augustine church. I could not see how I could well leave my young wife, for I knew I should be kept months away. But go I must. I did not consult feeling, nor the relations of my young wife. I simply informed her that I would have to leave her with her good mother for a time until I could get money to build a new church. I left on the first vessel for New Orleans. Not until I was out at sea did

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I learn that the old brig was not seaworthy. Fortunately we encountered no storms. I spent a very pleasant trip, and reached New Orleans safely.

It would take a volume to give even a synopsis of my trials and experiences for the next five months. I can note only a few of the incidents of my work.

I found Dr. Cross, at Poydras Street Church, a fine scholar, preacher, and amiable gentleman. The mistake of his life was his leaving the Methodist and uniting with the Episcopal Church. He never occupied the same position in that Church that he had in the Methodist Church. To personal friends he expressed his regrets. I found the Irish famine in full blast in New Orleans. All were making collections for the starving Irish. That took precedence of all other collections, and for months all the towns and cities were trying to help them. I preached, and Dr. Cross gave me a collection. I did some begging on the street. I called at Natchez, Vicksburg, Clarksville, and Nashville. I went to Memphis, and the brethren treated me very kindly. I took the street and increased my collections. I met a tall, fine-looking Kentucky grocery merchant. I addressed him as colonel. He asked me how I knew he was a colonel. I told him I only wanted to be polite, and that I was out begging. "Yes," said he, "we are bled to death

from day to day, and the black bags are under our noses on Sunday." I offered to show him my arm. He said he did not want to see it, but I insisted on showing it to him. By this time the clerks were at the door, and I told him I wanted to show the scars where an old doctor stuck his lancet in my arm, but missed the vein and got no blood, and that was the way they had been bleeding him—they got no blood. He slapped me on the shoulder and invited me to his office, saying he thought I would succeed, and gave me ten dollars. I visited another store, and found a quiet-looking gentleman at his desk. I told him he was busy and did not want to be disturbed by beggars, but that I was asking aid for a good cause and would be obliged if he would help me. He quietly handed me ten dollars. Then a man standing by said he never gave money unless he knew to whom he was giving and for what he was giving. I told him I was shingled with recommendations, and I would show them to him if he would give me five dollars, for I was recommended by lodge and chapter and city council, etc. I found he was a Mason, and he gave me the five dollars. Street begging is laborious work. I have never known how I could collect money in the street as a stranger; it has always been a mystery to me. I had rather do anything else.

I went from Memphis to St. Louis. Dr. Ca-

ples was in the important church. He gave me a collection. I went from St. Louis to Wheeling, and across the Cumberland and Alleghany mountains to Baltimore, where I met a very cold reception, and the people did nothing for my cause. I have always since had a distaste for Baltimore Methodists. I visited Richmond, Petersburg, and Norfolk. All treated me kindly and helped me. I visited Wilmington and held a protracted meeting, and was doing finely, when the brother with whom I was staying met me on the street and treated me very coolly. He asked me to go down to a certain store. When we reached it, there was a committee of Episcopalians and Methodists. They informed me that I was an impostor, and was collecting money under false pretenses. I asked for the evidence. They said the Rev. Mr. Adams, pastor of the Episcopal church, said I had a church, and did not need another. I asked them to bring the reverend gentleman around, but he had left the town. I proposed to stay over at the hotel until they could hear from Key West, when one of the brethren gruffly remarked that I ought not to travel on such a mission without testimonials. I told them I was loaded from head to foot with papers, and if they would send a guard with me I would show them. They let me go, and when I returned I threw my papers down on the table. The first one was a letter from Bishop

Soule, in which he indorsed me and highly recommended my enterprise. I handed over another paper, from the Masonic chapter, which had on it the names of three of Rev. Mr. Adams's vestrymen. About that time the Episcopal brethren got their hats and started. The Methodist became furious, and proposed to leave on the next train to follow Mr. Adams and bring him back. I went on with my meeting, and about doubled my collections.

I left Wilmington for Charleston, where I expected to wind up my mission. The churches were still in debt, and declined to give me a collection. I told them that I could collect more money in their own city than all the preachers there. I addressed myself to this task. I wanted only five hundred dollars more. I walked the streets of Charleston day in and day out in July. I now have a corn between my toes that was started during my walks on those pavements. When Saturday afternoon came, I was literally worn out. I did not know how much I had, having put the money in my trunk when the day's work was done; but on Sunday morning I counted my collections, and had gathered in five hundred and fifty-seven dollars, fifty-seven dollars more than I wanted. I had the lumber sawed at the mills in the upper part of the city, and engaged a sloop to take it to Key West. I never believed in spirit-rappings or any other superstitions, but

I had a distinct presentiment that that vessel was going to be wrecked. So strong was my impression that I left a duplicate of the bill at the mill. I went to the insurance office and proposed to insure. The agent dissuaded me, declaring there was no danger on the coast at that season of the year. The captain said he would be glad if he could get wind enough to carry his vessel to Key West. But with all this, I insured. I still felt a presentiment that the vessel would be wrecked. On July 5 I left Charleston, with thirty-two hundred dollars in gold, on a United States propeller for Key West. The thermometer stood at one hundred and five in Charleston. The brethren declared I would burn up at Key West, but when I reached the island the thermometer stood at eighty-seven. I immediately employed workmen to commence building, but my vessel failed to put in her appearance. Finally I saw a large yawl coming into port with flag up. It was the captain of the sloop on which I had shipped the lumber, or a part of it, for the church. His vessel was wrecked on the Florida reef, and was a total loss. I soon had the bill duplicated and sent forward, and collected my insurance. I had the church built storm-proof, and by October it was finished, paid for, and I was in it and preaching. The priest failed; the Episcopal minister came back with only a few hundred dollars and began to build; the Baptist minister got some help and

did the work of building himself. The church I built remained for fifty years, and was removed only a few years ago and another erected. We now have four churches on the island. Mine was the third church we had built during the two years I was there.

I determined to make a raid on the whisky traffic; but while my Church was with me, there were few who felt any interest in total abstinence. I organized the old Washingtonian Pledge, and held a temperance meeting every Friday night, but failed to control and direct the public mind to insure large results. We had an old bachelor, and he was one of the finest violinists I ever heard play. He was a strong anti-whisky man. There was another who was a fine flutist. I got these two men to play for me. I then engaged twenty of the girls, the best singers I could find on the island, and sent to New York for about three hundred temperance song books. We opened up a regular temperance opera. This brought out the whole town. When I left there we had over five hundred grown people on the pledge, besides the children's society. We literally fiddled, fluted, and sung the whisky traffic out of the town. There were but four places where whisky was retailed, and two of them had bakery attachments to eke out a living. I doubt if there has ever been a more efficient temperance organization than the old Washingtonian Pledge.

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It was educative as well as preventive. I had all the children who were large enough on the children's pledge, and had frequent turnouts, marching the children through the streets with flaming banners flying. I saw one of those temperance boys who graduated at Oxford. He said Key West was the soberest town he ever knew, and attributed it to that temperance organization. There is nothing like switching one off on the prohibition track when a boy. It may fix his principles for life.

When I first went out on the island the brother I was boarding with told me the council and citizens generally had decided that I should not preach to the negroes, and to so inform me. They had some trouble with the negroes and abolition preachers from the North who came to the island for their health. I was indignant that they should send to me such a prohibition, when I had made no arrangements to preach to the negroes at all. I replied that if they wanted their negroes to go to the devil it was their lookout, and if they chose to go with them it was their own concern, not mine. I was astonished, a few days after, to receive from the council and a long list of the slaveholders a request for me to take the negroes under my pastoral charge and preach to them. I consented to do so, provided the owners would send them promptly at 3 o'clock on the Sabbath, and that I would dismiss them at 4:30

o'clock; and that they must send them promptly at 7:30 o'clock on Tuesday night, and I would dismiss them at 8:30. It was the best negro congregation I ever had. Among them there was a negro singing master, who taught the negroes to sing. He led the music. Over a hundred negroes singing with well-trained voices is something seldom heard. Many of the better classes came to the services of the negroes to hear them sing. I remarked to Dr. M. on one occasion how well my negroes sang. He replied: "Yes, and how well you preach when you preach to them! Why not preach that way to the whites?"

We often take too much for granted when we preach to city churches. A member of the Church on one occasion was criticising his preacher for using language his congregation could not understand. "For instance, you said you would draw some inferences. Who do you suppose understood the meaning of the word 'inference'? There," said he, "comes a farmer who is more than an average of your congregation in intelligence. Let us ask him." The critic asked the farmer if he could draw an inference. He replied that he could—that he had a pair of oxen that could draw or pull it, if any two steers in the neighborhood could!

There lived on the island a gambler. He came from the seaboard. The people on the island

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gambled without rebuke. He was a sober but desperate man, and was feared by everybody. He was a man of stalwart build. I preached one night on the parable of the Prodigal Son. He was present. After preaching he came up, gave me his hand, and said, "I mean to seek salvation." I looked at him, for I knew of his general character and life, and told him he would have a hard time of it. He replied that he would work for himself. The next morning he came around and told me he owed some gambling debts and had some owing to him. I told him that there ought to be honor among thieves, and to go and forgive the debts they owed him and pay the debts he owed them. He soon returned and told me they had all agreed to quit even, and to his astonishment they were glad he was going to join the Church. After he was converted the whole man and manners were entirely changed. I have seen children who were once afraid of him walking the street holding his hand while he gave them candy and nuts out of his large coat pockets. I have seen him gloriously happy at the negro meetings. They made him steward, and he was a good one. The morning I left the island he came around to bid me good-by, and handed me five ten-dollar gold pieces. He said I might need it. His conversion did much to prove to all the people the power of a living Christianity. The Saviour certainly uttered two great truths when he said, "Ye

are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world.”

I spent two of the most eventful years of my long life on that island. I left for the mainland with my young wife to attend Conference. I met a kind reception from all, after having been absent for two years. It has been fifty-two years since I bade adieu to that rock in the sea.

CHAPTER VI.

Conference at Waynesville—On Quincy Station—Fighting the Prevailing Sins—Trouble with a Sexton—Victims of Strong Drink—A Christian's Death.

THE Conference in 1848 was held at Waynesville, a village composed of sea-island cotton and rice planters. They lived there because of the healthfulness of the location.

Bishop Andrew presided. It was a harmonious and delightful Conference. I was appointed to the Quincy Station—the best appointment in the Conference, made up of the best society I was ever in. The people were from Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. There was but one poor man in the town, and he, when sober, made a good living for his family. Judge Dupont, Dr. Munroe, William Munroe, Dr. Booth, the Harries, Joneses, Smiths, Greens, and scores of others, lived there. Most of them owned large plantations in the country. The town was the healthiest in middle Florida. The tobacco culture was at its best, and the product sold sometimes as high as seventy cents a pound. There were fine springs all around. The people were mostly Methodists. There were a few Episcopalian and Presbyterian families. The most of them were Scotch. There was but one Baptist man in the town. The best high school in Florida was lo-

cated in Quincy, and was attended by hundreds of children from all over the state.

We had but one real grog shop, and it was thoroughly organized for every evil work. The owner of it was very strongly fortified. He was largely connected with some of the best families, was rich, sheriff of the county, and the leader of the old Whig party. We soon organized a division of the Sons of Temperance. Dr. Phelps, the pastor of the Presbyterian church, came fully into the movement. The other minister, who had but recently come to the town, was an anti-prohibitionist, and felt it his duty to preach against the organization. He called it baptized infidelity. I felt it to be my duty to preach against the preacher, and stated that if I were to take out a search warrant for a jug the first place I would go to find one would be the house of the preacher who preached against temperance societies. I did not know that he had, only a few days before, laid in a good supply of wine and brandy. He came down town very much enraged at my remarks, and said if the enlightened, cultured people could stand such ministerial abuse he would resign and leave the town. No one seemed to care, and he left for Pensacola.

I soon met the old sheriff. He said I was a young man of promise, and if I would attend to my preaching and quit meddling with other people's business I might do good. He said that he

had broken up all the little temperance organizations which had been started in that town; that he paid for a license and had a right to his business. I told him that I had broken up many whisky shops, and I intended to close him up—that Greek had met Greek, as he would see. He sent me a note saying that if I did not let his business alone his wife would quit the church and he would not pay his subscription. I replied I would be sorry for his good wife to leave the church. As to his subscription, I had it erased and did not want any whisky money. He threatened to whip me, but I had no fear on that line. He stopped speaking to me. At last he gave a fine dinner and invited all the preachers and their families, leaving me and my wife out. He had his baby baptized. Brother S., the oldest and leading member of the Conference, saw me the next day and administered a reproof. He threatened that if I did not change I would be taken off the station at the next Conference. I felt a supreme contempt for his reproof. I told him the old colonel was not a fool, and that he then had more respect for me than he had for him; that he would invite him to his big dinner, but when he got sick he would send for me to pray for him, and when he died he would request that I preach at his funeral. I told him that was prophecy, and to put it in his book.

We kept up a constant fire on his whisky busi-

ness until half the year was gone. One morning as I was passing his whisky shop he came out and grasped both my hands in his. I was at a loss to know what he meant. He told me I was right, and that he had sold out; that his business had well-nigh ruined his two oldest boys, and he never intended to sell another drop of liquor. He invited me to take supper with him. Before the year closed he asked me if money could keep me there another year. I replied that I was in the hands of the Conference and liable to be moved, but that the other brethren might remain. The look he gave me when I mentioned them was one of disgust. He said: "You know they are of no account, except to eat big dinners; and if you leave the cause of temperance will go down." I wish those good brethren could have seen his look of contempt for them.

I was sent to the St. Mary's District, where I remained for two years. From there I went to Tallahassee for one year, and then to the Tallahassee District. I boarded my wife in Quincy. My old friend by this time was wasting to the grave with rheumatism. The doctor said he might die at any time. He told his wife that he wanted to see a preacher. She asked him which one. He said: "There is but one; send for Simon." His wife told me this. I went at once to see him, and found him in his large armchair. He talked of his future. He asked me to take him

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into the Church, but said if he lived he wanted to vindicate me by joining publicly. He asked me to pray for him. I cannot put on paper the feelings I had when I knelt by him to pray, in view of all the past. He died during the Annual Conference in Quincy, and requested that I should conduct his funeral.

I would say to all young preachers, Don't be rash, but be men. Your business is to reprove sin. Denounce it in all places, high and low. Sinners are not always fools, although they may often act the fool. Their inner moral sense and enlightened convictions are always on the side of truth. The men who make, sell, and drink whisky are all, in conscience, against it. They know it is wrong.

We boarded with a private family. The husband was a formal member of the Church; his wife was a beautiful society woman. They had one little baby girl. The wife liked to go to balls and dances, although her husband bitterly opposed it. She was devoted to my wife, but disliked me very much. Her husband spoke to me of his wife's dislike. I told him I knew it, but to leave his house on that account would require explanation, and I preferred to remain at least awhile longer. I was holding a protracted meeting, and on Saturday night handled the dancing question without gloves, and especially dancing wives. Mrs. J. was there and heard the sermon.

When we left the church my wife said we had just as well pack up, for Mrs. J. could not stand that sort of preaching, and we would have to leave. I said, "Let us wait and see." Sunday morning she was at church. I called for mourners, and she came forward. I opened the door of the Church, and she joined. Then her whole conduct toward me was changed. I asked her why she used to hate me so. She said every time she thought of going to the ball my gray eyes were looking right into her heart condemning her. She still lives to bless the Church.

Our sexton was a man who had seen better days. The church wanted to help him, and did so by giving him a larger salary to be sexton. He kept the church clean, and was prompt on all occasions. One Sabbath evening it seemed from the clouds that we could have no service. When I saw the clouds had passed around I went to the church, rang the bell, and began to light the lamps in the pulpit; then in came the sexton. I saw he was displeased. He said I ought to have sent for him. I spilled the oil on the new carpet, which increased his wrath. I told him I would get the tailor to clean the carpet, but he made no reply as he went on lighting the lamps. I thought I would appeal to his sympathy. I told him the year would soon close and maybe I would be gone. He replied, "Thank God for it!" saying that if I knew it he was not the only one who

would be glad of it; that the church and town might have some rest, for he had done nothing but ring that bell ever since I had been there. He paid my energy a very high compliment without intending it. He came to me the next day and made his apology, saying he hoped I would be returned. Quincy at that time was a model community and had a model church.

With all this sunshine there were long days of shadows and darkness. I learned that one of the families was in trouble. I called to see them, and found the mother and sister in deep distress. The mother told me her oldest son, a boy of fine promise, had been drunk at night and had fallen in the street, and had been brought home drunk. While she was talking her daughter—one of the loveliest girls I ever knew—came in and fell down beside me, and exclaimed, "Uncle Simon, how can I go to church or be seen in the street when my brother was brought home drunk?" What a tide of woe and sorrow swept through the soul of that unoffending mother and daughter!

Not long after that occurrence, a prominent brother asked me to walk with him. I saw he was in trouble. We had not gone far before he told me that his oldest son, just home from college, had *delirium tremens*, and had cut his face and hands trying to break through the window. He clasped his head with both hands, while tears ran down his face, and exclaimed, "My head and

heart will burst! My poor boy, my drunken boy!" These scenes were behind the curtain, but they were dreadful.

We had an excellent Sunday school, composed of cultivated boys and girls. No church ever had a brighter outlook for the future. I spent about thirteen years of my life in and around Quincy, and I could say with the old patriarch Jacob, "Come not now into the future of those noble boys." I often urged the fathers of many of them to come fully into the temperance cause and bring the boys with them. They bade me Godspeed in my efforts to reform the drunkards, but seemed to feel that they and their sons were in no danger—that they lived on a plane above the danger line. To-day thousands of the wealthier and better educated parents feel the same way, and think only the lower classes need the aid of the prohibition cause. They don't apprehend the danger for their own boys, not seeing and realizing that whisky has no respect for wealth, mind, or family. More than twenty of these noble boys have been wrecked on that dangerous whisky coast. None of them who drank now live to read this sad history. There were eighteen young men of us when I was a mere youth. I was the only pronounced prohibitionist, and I am the only one saved.

One of the richest men in the town was an elder in another Church. His oldest boy was just

budding into manhood. I knew he was drinking. I urged his father to join the Sons of Temperance. He laughed at me, and pointed me to the drunkards to work on. He had two sons. Little did he think they were standing where volcanic fires raged and earthquakes slept! Both of his promising boys died drunk.

Strange that an enlightened, Christian nation should perpetuate such an all-destroyer of soul and body. If a druggist and doctor were to sell and administer drugs that would produce such effects, the public would lynch the druggist and hang the doctor and burn the store.

Colonel Preston, with his sanctified wife, lived about a mile from the village. I knew much of him when he was rich and when by misfortune he became poor, but no outer circumstances seemed in any way to affect his faith or life. I met his brother-in-law coming from his home. He said the colonel was very sick and could not live out the day. I went at once to see him. His mind was clear. I told him that his two physicians had informed me that he could not live through the day. I then asked him if I should pray for him. He replied that he did not need prayer, but asked me to pray for his wife and servants. They had no children. He said that for many years he had settled his accounts with God before he slept, and if he was here he would settle here, and if there he would settle there. I

had some misgivings about religious excitement, notwithstanding this was my eighth year in the ministry. I determined to see what real effect religion had on a dying man. I talked freely with him on his personal experience and how it stood in his present relation to death and the future. He declared that he realized that it was brighter to him than ever before. I left him, and he slept. Late in the afternoon the doctor came, took me aside, and told me that in a few moments he would be gone. I went to him, roused him, and said to him: "Colonel, in a few more moments you will be gone. Tell me now, is camp-meeting religion true? Does your religion bear you through now?" He turned his eyes to me, then gently folded his hands upon his breast and said, "Look at me!" and, with an unearthly smile, passed away. I said to my soul: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

CHAPTER VII.

Conference at Albany—Bishop Capers Presiding—On St. Mary's District—A Popular Camp Meeting—Prays for God to Kill a Man—The Man's Conversion—A Great Failure and a Wise Lesson.

THE Conference of 1849 was held in Albany, with Bishop Capers presiding. While he was not the equal as a presiding officer of some of the other bishops, he was one of the most refined and cultured gentlemen I ever knew, and sometimes a most eloquent preacher. He insisted on appointing me presiding elder, but I remonstrated, for I really felt that I did not have one single qualification, either by age or experience, for such an office. The presiding eldership was differently estimated at that time from what it is at present. The Quarterly Conference was an important occasion. It was one of the festivities of the Church, when the presiding elder was expected to preach and defend the doctrines of the Church. Our Saturday meetings were attended by the official members of the town and country. They always held love feast on Sunday morning. The presiding elder was in command of the district, and the Church was expected to obey orders. I was appointed to the St. Mary's District. I left Quincy with my wife, in a fine turnout, for the district, over two hundred miles across the country, the most of

the way through a thinly settled wire-grass section. It turned very cold and sleeted. Our trip was a very unpleasant one. We reached St. Mary's. Our boarding place had been prepared, and a most agreeable one it was, in the home of the widow Bessant, on the bank of the St. Mary's River, not far from the coast. St. Mary's was especially noted for its health and fine society. It was still a nice old town, made up of good and bad society. I preached Sunday morning. The brethren said we could not have service at night on account of the bad behavior of the young men. I told them I would preach, and I did, without being disturbed. There were a score of loafing young men, the sons of wealthy parents, who thought they could do as they pleased.

At my first quarterly meeting the young men were out in force, and misbehaved. I reproved them, and they sent me word that I did not know where I was, and if I did not mind I would soon be nowhere. The brethren insisted on having no service at night. Over their protest I announced my appointment. The town expected trouble. I sang, prayed, and then accidentally placed my hands in my bosom as I stood erect. I told the young men that we were now ready for any demonstration they might choose to make—that I would pay all expenses, and it would only cost them their time and trouble. The congregation was as still as death. I urged them to act

if they intended to, and not to rock me in the back, for I was afraid of an assassin. No one moved, and I never had any trouble with them. One of them was converted at our camp meeting, and we let him sleep in the preachers' tent.

One morning early the preachers were discussing the disorderly conduct of the young men in St. Mary's. I remarked that they had not troubled me, when our new convert arose and said they never would. He asked me if I did not remember the night when I stood in the pulpit with my hands on my two pistols; that there was not a man in their crowd that would have moved for a thousand dollars; that they knew I was a good shot, and would send a bullet through him as soon as he arose. I had no pistols or any other weapon, but I was not going to be stopped from preaching by a gang of wild boys.

The district was a large one, about three hundred miles long and seventy-five miles wide. On the coast there were many wealthy, cultured families, the very best society in Georgia. The district took in all that part of east Florida as far down as St. Augustine. The most of the district was sparsely populated. The people in the back country lived by raising stock. Early in the year I lost from various causes five preachers, a very great thinning of the ranks for so large a district. I called a meeting of the rest, and we determined to change the entire work and occupy

all the territory we had. I had a noble band of self-sacrificing young men. It was a herculean task to supply the place of five preachers. I planned for all the protracted meetings, and ordered the preachers to such points as I thought they suited. I was the officer, preacher, and evangelist—just what every presiding elder and bishop ought to be. If the preachers and Church can be kept up on a high plane of spiritual power, all the collections and other interests of the Church go up with them. It is wonderful how much the presiding elder and preachers can accomplish when they work together with the one purpose to subjugate a whole district for Christ; but it takes physical strength, courage, and spiritual power to accomplish such grand results.

By the middle of the year we had the whole district in a blaze. When the presiding elder and all the preachers get in real earnest, the Church will soon fall into line and work with them, and the faith and life of the Church will at once come to the front.

I will here refer to some of my experiences that may be of benefit to some of the younger brethren. St. Paul was a master in ethics, metaphysics, and the philosophy of his day. He was a great preacher and evangelist; not a catchpenny revivalist or evangelist of this day, but an evangelist of the apostolic day that planted churches beyond, where there were no churches. With all

these great gifts, on important occasions when brought before kings and rulers, he appealed to his experience both in his own defense and the defense of the gospel he preached.

We had on the district a popular camp ground, in the midst of the best society in that region. Many of those who attended the services were not in the Church. I had at the camp meeting a company of the best preachers on the district. We held a council. I told them that those cultured classes could not be reached in the ordinary way, but the camp meeting must be managed with propriety, and that everything must be conducted decently and in order. We went on from Wednesday until Saturday afternoon, when I became restless, for I saw that we were not doing much toward conversions. At the afternoon service I ordered the men to the woods on the left and the women on the right, to pray. I was astonished when I saw all the preachers and people, with only a few exceptions, obey the command. I, with a few others of the brethren, remained at the preachers' tent. At a late hour I heard a shout on the men's side, and presently many shouts from both sides. About sundown the men came back in a long line, singing "Canaan, sweet Canaan." They rounded to under the stand and continued the excitement. We went out after the women, and found them in rings seated on the wire-grass carpet, singing

shouting, and talking to mourners. We got them up and back to the tents, but we had little supper. I put up a brother who tried to preach, but they shouted him down. I tried to control the excitement, but utterly failed. I left the stand in disgust, because I could not control the meeting. At a late hour I saw them carrying a young lady from the stand to one of the tents. They sent for me and Dr. Curtis. When we got there we found that it was one of the leading society young ladies. She was warm, but pulseless and breathless. The doctor took me aside and said it was a very dangerous case of catalepsy, and that I must command that she be guarded and kept perfectly quiet; that her mind might go off like a match. I obeyed orders and appointed a watch of trusty young ladies. She lay all night without moving. She was in the same state until after the eight o'clock service in the morning.

I had read of a similar case in an old Methodist magazine in New York, where a prominent young lady had been carried home from a Methodist meeting apparently dead, and two doctors were sent for, when an old Irish woman came in with her hymn book. The family and doctors ordered her away, but she persisted in claiming that she understood the case, and began singing "Alas, and did my Saviour bleed?" when the young woman arose and embraced the old saint. The doctors left and the family went to praying.

I determined to try the experiment, for the doctor had done nothing ; so I got several young ladies and went to her side. I told them to sing "Alas, and did my Saviour bleed?" While singing the last verse the young lady opened her eyes. I bade them repeat it, when she rose up shouting. I had never before seen such a heavenly-looking face, nor have I since. I could not control the meeting, and several times tried to close it ; but it would not close, and went on from day to day until all who remained were converted. I was much displeased, although many of those people I wanted were converted, but not in the way I had planned.

I held another ten days' meeting for Waynesville, a nice, cultured community. I took with me several of the same preachers I had at the camp meeting. The power of the Holy Spirit was present at our first service. Clouds of mercy seemed to gather, without lightning or thunder, and pour down in gentle showers on the whole community ; yet all was silent. Many were converted, but there was no shouting. I had become more reconciled to the wonderful movement at the camp meeting and its results, and now wanted to duplicate it. I became dissatisfied with the way the meeting was running, and was determined to have some shouting. I told the preacher I would go myself and preach in the afternoon to the negroes and have them shout,

then bring them up to the white church. I preached to a large crowd of negroes. I talked to them of heaven, but no one would move, and not a shout could I raise. Salvation came as soft and as still as the twilight dews fall from heaven.

There were several interesting scenes at the close of this remarkable meeting. There lived near the village a local preacher, and in the village a young Presbyterian preacher. They had a stiff quarrel over the subject of shouting that came near ending seriously. I sent word to the Methodist brother that he could never teach the Presbyterian to shout that way, but to bring him to my ten days' meeting and I would teach him the first step in shouting. They were both there. I took the young preacher in special charge. He was a clever, nice young man. I invited him to love feast, "preached" him, gave him special attention; he took in the whole meeting.

There was a prominent citizen who had come with his family farther South in the hope of helping his consumptive condition; but he had reached the last stages of the disease, and there was no hope. Neither he nor his wife belonged to any Church. The three pastors—Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian—all visited him. He sent for me. I called to see him, and after prayer I said to him on leaving: "General, give your heart to God." He replied that from all he had heard of me he expected more than that.

I asked him what he expected, and he said he expected that I would tell him how to give his heart to God. He was a man of fine culture. I was at a loss what to tell him, but rallied. I told him to let me take him into the Church and baptize him and give him the sacrament. He replied that he was not fit. I told him that joining the Church and taking the sacrament would not save him, but submission to God would. He said he was not fit. I insisted that he submit. I saw the struggle he was in. At last tears came into his eyes. He was braced up in the bed; his hands fell by his side, and he said: "Glory to God! Now you can do anything you please with me—take me into the Church, baptize me, and give me the sacrament." He and his wife and four children were boarding with Colonel Nigens. At the close of the protracted meeting I invited my young Presbyterian brother and the local preacher around to the baptism of the general and his wife and children. I saw that during the service the company was becoming more excited than my sick brother could stand, so I asked them into the large parlor. After I had talked with my new convert and his wife about the future, I went into the room. I found the local preacher and his wife on one sofa shouting, sister W. on another sofa in the same state, and my young preacher walking the floor, crying, "Glory to God!" I said, "Wild fire?" He replied, "No,

God bless you, this is the fire from heaven." I met him twenty-five years after, when I was on the Rome District. He had joined the Episcopal Church. I did not recognize him, but he knew me, and we had a good handshake. He said he had never forgotten that Waynesville meeting.

I had another ten days' meeting appointed at St. Mary's. I ordered several of the preachers who were at the camp meeting to assist me—brothers Blake, Steward, and Pratt. They have all passed over the river safely. We had a large congregation. The people were in high spirits for a good meeting. I told the sinners of the town that if they did not want religion they had better leave, for we had come to take the place. We went on until Wednesday and proclaimed a general fast, then continued until Sunday night. If there was a tear shed, or any conviction shown by either saint or sinner, I did not discern it. The ten days' meeting ended in utter failure. I was deeply humiliated, and felt that my revival power was gone.

My next quarterly meeting was forty miles away, at Waynesboro, which appointment was served by a good local preacher. We had no church building or organization. I took no help. I spent the Friday night ten miles from the village with a very poor old man and his wife, but they were the salt of the earth. I knew much

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of the borough, having been there when on the Irwin Circuit. I knew of the largest, richest, and most wicked man in the county, who lived at the borough. I knew of his opposition to the Methodist Church. With all his wickedness, he did not drink. When I prayed that night I told the Lord all about the big sinner, and deliberately asked the Lord to kill him—put him out of the way.

When I reached the village the next day I saw the place full of horses, carriages, wagons, etc. We preached in the courthouse. I supposed it was court week, but my reputation had gone before me, and the people were out *en masse*. I preached as best I could. After dismissing the congregation, who should come up but this man, and invite me home with him? He kept the hotel, and said he could entertain me better than anybody else. I looked at him, and said to myself, "I prayed last night for the Lord to kill you, and here you are the first man to invite me to the hospitality of your house." That night I called mourners. There was a large round table in front of the stand, and the first man to move was my big sinner. Seventeen others, all grown-up men, followed. My big sinner was in great distress. He said he was reared a Hard-shell, and feared he was reprobate. I encouraged him to continue. He ate but a little breakfast or dinner. I preached in the afternoon, and about halfway the sermon he was gloriously

converted. Such a shout as he gave is seldom heard. He took charge of the meeting and exhorted all to come to Christ, saying that if he could pardon him he could pardon anybody. We received about thirty into the Church, then organized the charge, and appointed Austin Smith, my big sinner, class leader. My wife and I spent a night with him on our way to Conference the next year, and he was all right. Seven years after, as Bible agent, I stayed at his home again, and found him the same true man and Christian. From that time to this I have never prayed for God to kill another man.

I left soon the next morning for St. Mary's, a wiser if not a better man; and from that time to this have never dictated to the Lord how he should run his revival. Seek to know the mind of the Spirit, and if it comes like the tread of an earthquake or cyclone sweep, or soft as the twilight dews, or silent as the light breaks over the western world, follow the cloud, walk under its shadow by day and camp under its watchfires by night, and pray the Holy Spirit to lead us all the way. That was one of the most successful years of my life.

CHAPTER VIII.

Conference at Madison, Fla.—Rev. Ira L. Potter Elected President—Elected to the General Conference—The Revival at St. Mary's—Gets Lost.

THE next Conference, 1850, met in Madison. We had no bishop. Brother Ira L. Potter was elected president, and conducted the business of the Conference well. Dr. Wightman (afterwards bishop) was with us. He was a most cultured man and a grand preacher. Brothers P. P. Smith, Blake, and myself were elected to the General Conference, to be held at St. Louis in May, 1850. There were but few railroads, so we had to make much of the long journey by stage, both going and coming. The cholera was raging in the city, but the Conference knew nothing about it. The first intimation we had of it was from Dr. Pierce, who announced brother Isaac Boring dying and eighteen members unable to reach the Conference. The Conference was at a loss to know what was the best course to take, but finally in the presence of death decided to remain a week and transact all the important business of the Church. Brother Blake and myself had the cholera in a mild form. The long trip to and from St. Louis at that season of the year interfered very much with our revivals on the district; but conditions soon reacted, and the

success of the last year aided us to go forward in our aggressive movements.

We opened a ten days' meeting in Brunswick, then a much smaller town than it is now a city. It ought to be the largest city on the southern Atlantic coast, because of natural water and land advantages. There were four preachers, all hospitably entertained. Saturday night of the meeting came, and no special demonstration. I told the preachers that I knew the place of power and how to get it, and if they would go with me we could get it; so we all knelt, Jacob-like. At a late hour we heard a shout on the opposite side of the street. We thought the town was on fire; and so it was, but it was fire from heaven. A young lady had been praying during the night, and at that late hour was converted. Many houses were lighted up, and the divine power seemed to pervade the whole town.

Our love feast was a memorable one. That Sunday night about twenty men joined the Church. I never witnessed such a change in any community in so short a time, nor did I ever see four preachers praying all night together for the divine power. Our next point of attack was Jacksonville. There never had been a revival in that town before. Our meeting was a full success from beginning to close. No one can predict who will be brought into the kingdom in a genuine revival. Many of the children of the old

Spanish Catholic families were converted and joined the Methodist Church. Jacksonville had become a prominent resort for Northern consumptives. It was a sad sight to see hundreds of those afflicted people walking the streets bent over, coughing their lives away. Strange that men of sense should try to live in those higher, inhospitable climates, when they could live where climate and soil are more congenial to human nature. Consumption does not originate in Florida. I spent about eighteen years of my early life preaching in that state. In many respects it is the best state in the United States, both as to climate and products. The state of Florida owes much of its civilization and education to the sacrifices and labor of Methodist preachers, who for many years were as a general thing the only preachers in the state. Our itinerant system carried them there.

I was determined to make another attack on St. Mary's, and took several preachers with me. Our opening service was poorly attended, and the prospect gloomy. The young men of the town, and other denominations, openly opposed the Methodist Church, although we had a large membership. The young men declared if I protracted my meeting they would have a ball and dance me down. I was informed of their purpose, but had no idea they would carry their threats into effect; but I learned on Monday

that large preparations were being made for the ball at the custom house, which was only sixty yards from the church.

When the evening came the street was crowded, some going to the ball and others to the church. The opposing forces were out in their full strength. I had forgotten about the ball, and went on preaching, when all at once one of the most prominent members of the church—a lawyer and mayor of the town—rose up and shouted as loud as he could, and others followed until the whole house was in the highest state of excitement. Men were lying down on the seats slapping their hands and shouting at the top of their voices. I went to the door and looked out to find how it sounded abroad. I met Dr. Curtis, who had been shouting, and said to him, “The city council will have us up.” Exultantly he pointed to the mayor, six of the aldermen, and the marshal, all of whom were in the excitement. The doctor asked how they could have us up when the mayor, aldermen, and marshal were all there. The galleries for the negroes were full, but it was the white people’s meeting, and the blacks had to be quiet ; but we had a local preacher from the North who was a deeply pious man. He went up into the gallery and told the negroes that if they were black they had as good a right to praise God as the whites, and turned them loose, and we had a stormy time until a late hour.

There was an old Catholic brother whose wife and daughters were Methodists. His house was about equidistant from the church and ballroom. He told me that at the first shout the dancers all came to the windows and looked toward the church, but soon rallied and the dance went on until the second crash came at the church, which was when brother Kately turned the negroes loose. He said he had never heard such a noise at a church, and that the dancers left in every direction, as he could see them by the light of the moon, and soon all the lights in the custom house were out. When the meeting was over we passed the custom house, and all was dark and still as death.

Captain Cost, who was in the revenue service and in command of a vessel, was spending the summer in St. Mary's with his family. They were Episcopalians, but the captain was not a member of any Church. One night during the meeting I saw him and his family in the congregation. He was about forty-five years old, of stately appearance, and was dressed in full uniform. When I called for mourners he came at once to the altar and remained until he was converted, his wife and her two sisters following him. I baptized his younger children, and asked him to give me his experience. He said he was born in that town, of Huguenot parents. They died while he was young and left him a large property, which

his executors drank up and spent and left him a poor orphan boy. One night while brother Bessant was holding a protracted meeting in that old church, he went up to the altar and asked God to forgive his sins and be his friend. He said he felt strangely near to God, and was very happy for days. He had been in storms at sea and in dangers in the Mexican war, and had often walked the deck alone and wished and prayed that he could feel again as he once felt in that old church; and when I invited penitents he said maybe he might at the same place have that feeling again, which he did. I had taken to my preaching the honor that brought so important a man to the altar, but found I was mistaken, for the seed had been sown more than thirty years before. This, however, encouraged me: the Bible says, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper." A seed may be wafted on many a wind, or drift on many a tide, or whirl in many an eddy, but at the last may find a congenial soil where it will germinate and grow. God says it "shall not return unto me void."

The Episcopal minister was a frail little man from Kentucky who came south for his health, and had a small church in St. Mary's. He was absent in Kentucky during my meeting, and, as I learned, all his members but one family, with

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Captain Cost, joined the Methodist Church. When the preacher returned he was very indignant and said some hard words to me, but I felt that he had a just right to be angry. I told him the church in Jacksonville was without a pastor, and that I knew some of the leading members and would help him to get the place, which he did. I have always proselyted any one I could, because I felt that I was giving them a better Church and better religion in return. I am a proselyte myself, having been born and baptized in the Lutheran Church. If a man wants to be useful and a blessing to his race, let him join the Methodist Church, where he will find room and place to work.

Fifty years ago the St. Mary's District was a hard work for any man. I was young and strong. I wore out a fine horse and buggy the two years I was on the district, and passed through many severe trials. Traveling once up the Altamaha River, I got lost. Night overtook me, and I could not find the way in the dark. I took out my horse, hungry and tired, and tied him up. I had no matches or pistol, and sat all night in my buggy. It was a lonesome night; and, besides, my fears were excited. A young man had but a short time before come near losing his life by an encounter with a large panther, and was saved only by the timely help of his faithful dog. There was nothing to break the stillness of the long

hours but the sound of the night-birds. I left at dawn, and called at the first cabin to get something for me and my horse to eat. They gave me some fat bacon and coarse corn bread (the meal having been ground in a handmill), and corn-meal coffee sweetened with sirup.

I was often three weeks away on the district, and traveled over two hundred miles. The people were poor, but did the best they could for their preachers. I had a noble set of them—brothers George C. Clark, Blake, Stewart, Pratt, Valentine, Stanley, and Richardson. They have all gone to their reward, and their self-sacrificing works do follow them. They broke up the ground and sowed seed that is bringing a grand harvest, which they are reaping in the fairer field above. We see only a part here; there we shall see the whole.

The city preachers and railroad presiding elders can have but an imperfect knowledge of what the preachers passed through in the generations of the past. Why those men should have voluntarily accepted such trials and privations for so small an earthly compensation I cannot tell, only that it was the love of Christ and human souls. I have heard many people say they wished to have their lives to live over again. I am not one of that number, for I fear I would break down long before I got half way back and quit the field. I am glad it is all in the past now. I cannot

see how any man could travel over the way I have traveled and still live. The roughest places in the past have become to me the smoothest, and the greatest blessings of my life. Thank God for trials and sufferings here!

Having ended my two years' work on the district, I proposed to leave it, and took my wife and baby and left for Conference, which was to be held at Thomasville. The record of those two years has gone to the books that will be opened in the great hereafter, when the mists of life are cleared away and we shall be seen in our true light. God grant that the mistakes and wrongs of life may all be blotted out!

CHAPTER IX.

The Conference at Thomasville—Bishop Paine Presiding—Sent to Tallahassee Station—Preaching to Negroes—Pardon—Arranging to Go to California—The Conference Protests—Graham Goes.

THE Conference of 1851 was held in Thomasville, a prosperous, growing village, containing many representative Methodist families. That part of Georgia was rapidly filling up with many cotton planters and best citizens of the state.

I had left the St. Mary's District not expecting to return, and carried my wife and baby with me to Conference. Bishop Paine presided. He was an accomplished officer, and sometimes a grand preacher. He was a very cultivated man, but occasionally a little dogmatic. He was the first bishop with whom I had dared to make an issue. He sent for me and my wife to come to his room that afternoon. I thought surely he had not so far forgotten himself as to make a private matter of our Conference differences. He had invited me to an interview about sending me to take charge of the mission in California, saying he thought I was the man for the work, and he wanted me to get ready by the next Conference. I made up my mind to go, and sent my wife to Key West to see her mother and tell her good-by.

I was stationed at Tallahassee, the capital of the state, which had a wide reputation for many

bloody feuds by the Reeds, Alstons, and others. But those days, with their scenes of horror, had passed away, and peace and prosperity, religion and morality, had taken their place. The Methodist church was the church of the town. Its members included many of the representative citizens. The women were deeply pious: a better class I have never known as pastor. The richest man we had in the church was a wholesale dry goods and grocery merchant. He sold whisky by wholesale. When I administered the sacrament, I said I did not want to give it to any one who sold or drank whisky. He did not commune. The chairman of the board of stewards came to me after service and excitedly said that by my rashness we had lost three hundred dollars. I replied that we had plenty of money besides that, and to wait and let us see. A short time after that I was up town, and I saw barrels upon barrels in front of the merchant's store. He had sold out all his whisky. I walked into his store. He met me cordially, and said he would sell no more whisky. He ordered his clerk to fit me out with the best suit of clothes in the store. He became one of my lifelong friends. His convictions were right and in line with his preacher, but, like thousands of Church members, his life was wrong.

Tallahassee, like Quincy, was made up of the very best society from the older states. The city is located on a high hill in the midst of the best

cotton and tobacco lands in the state, with beautiful lakes abounding in fine fish. It is only about eighteen miles from the coast. There was no Baptist church. The Episcopal bishop was both bishop and pastor of the church. The Presbyterian minister was one of the best in the connection—Dr. Hume, from the East, who was there for his health. There was a large boarding house near all the churches. The proprietor told me that often on Sunday morning the boarders would assemble in the parlor and discuss where they would go to church. Some would say, "Let us go to the Episcopal church." Others would object to the opening service. Some would say, "Let us go to hear Dr. Hume." Others would object to his long prayers and sermon. Others would urge the crowd to go to the Methodist church, and give as a reason that I would begin exactly at eleven and quit at twelve. The landlord said he had often seen all of his boarders go to the Methodist church. As a stationed preacher I always brought the service within an hour. Preachers weary their congregations by preliminary services, and often ruin a good sermon at the close by a poor exhortation. When a preacher begins let him begin, and when he quits let him quit. It is laborious for a congregation to be preached to death instead of life.

Rev. F. A. Branch was pastor of the church when I was presiding elder. We had a local

preacher, an Englishman, who had charge of the high school. His wife and mother were also English. The professor was also a Swedenborgian; so was his mother, a very cultured lady. Her daughter-in-law did not hold their Swedenborgian views. One morning she told her daughter-in-law that brother Branch and myself were coming to see them. There was a hill between our starting point and their house; so the daughter took her seat in the door to watch and see if we were really coming. She told us that she soon saw our stovepipe hats as we were coming over the hill. This very pious old lady told me that after the death of her son he spent more time with her than while he was living. She had many strange visions which were difficult to explain unless she could really see into the future. Swedenborg was a great, learned, and good man. No doubt he really thought he saw all the visions which he records; but, never having seen anything of the kind, I have always had my doubts as to their reality. And yet St. Luke says, "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." Certainly it is possible that the powers of the mind may be so expanded as to see into the future. The prophets, by some means, saw what would come to pass in the future. St. John saw much of the great future. We often get credit for fore-

sight when it is only a better knowledge of what may take place.

We had a large negro congregation, and while the galleries were large, I generally preached in the afternoon to the negroes in the main body of the church. I frequently saw negroes who had been drinking at some low whisky shop come into the church. I determined to stop it. I ordered the sexton to lock the outside door. I had two colored preachers, Jim and Isaac. I directed them to "smell out" the congregation seat by seat, and when they found one who had been drinking to stand him up in the aisle. It was in the days of slavery. I saw that I had hit upon the right plan, but told the sexton to unlock the door, and announced that I would not "smell them out" then, but would do so if I saw any more come to church drunk. I told them they could not hide their jug from the Lord under the bed in that box with an old quilt to cover it.

The next morning a good old cook at the house where I was boarding came to me crying. She said she wanted me to tell her husband that she had never said anything to me about his jug. He had abused her and kicked her out of the bed, swearing that God never made a man that could know that the jug was under the bed in a box covered with an old quilt if some one had not told him, and that she had told me, and I

had exposed him before the whole congregation. I told her that Boon, her husband, was under conviction, and to pray for him. He was at church the next Sunday afternoon, and as deeply penitent as he could be. He was converted. I saw him eight years afterwards. He said he was still sober and trying to get to heaven. I reckon that I have at least fifty similar cases among both white and colored, but none of latter years. I have often reasoned why the gospel doesn't have the same direct personal effect that it had in former years. The effective power of preaching is in the personal, direct application of it.

Judge W. came into my study one day about half drunk. He said I was a man of sense. I replied that we were both men of sense when he was sober. He said I did not think a man a fool because he differed from me. I told him that wise men often differed. He said that he had been thinking that for people to be always praying and dingdonging at the Lord was not respectful. I told him that he had not studied the subject; that when he went home to send for his poor old neighbors (for he had many, and was very kind to them), give them the keys to the corn crib, wardrobe, etc., and tell them to come and get flour, meat, and clothes when they needed them, and not be always coming to him; that it was not respectful. It would not be long be-

fore they would feel that you belong to them also, and it would not take twelve months before they would envy you because you are rich and they are poor, and hate you because you did not give them all they wanted. He replied that they already thought he belonged to them, and the ones who hated him most were among those for whom he had done the most. "Now, Judge," said I, "make him come to your steps with his bag under his arm. Let him beg until he cries, until he feels his utter dependence. Then help him, and he will be humble and grateful." Praying has a subjective effect: the more and longer a man prays, the more humble and grateful he becomes. Take man's dependence away from him and the Lord could not control him.

I was the most of the year arranging for my trip to California. The Annual Conference was held in Tallahassee. Bishop Andrew informed me that Dr. Boring would have charge of the mission, but I was expected to go; but when the time came the Conference and church protested, and brother Graham was sent in my place.

That was one of the brightest and happiest years of my life. I held several protracted meetings, but with only partial success. The power I had while on the St. Mary's District was gone. I could not tell how it went. Much has been said about the climatic conditions of Tallahassee. There were seven stewards. Five of them held

that office for over forty years. Colonel Perkins was superintendent of the Sunday school for more than fifty years. He was the last one left. He was a perfect man, and died last year. His noble wife still lives. He was the only one left of that noble class who were there in 1851. The Tallahassee church was a model in all respects; it responded to all the demands of the Conference and met all the claims of her preachers. I was pastor there one year and presiding elder seven years. For two years during the war I served the Pisgah charge, which was in the same county. This brought me into close relations with the church for ten years of my preacher life. The generation that then lived sleeps in the house of silence in the midst of the live oak and magnolia in that beautiful graveyard. I have often felt that I would like to rest with them and rise together at the sound of the last trumpet.

What sinners value I resign;
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine.
I shall behold thy blissful face,
And stand complete in righteousness.
This life's a dream, an empty show,
But the bright world to which I go
Hath joys substantial and sincere;
When shall I wake and find me there?

CHAPTER X.

Conference at Tallahassee—Bishop Andrew Presides—
Appointed to Tallahassee District—Criticises Mr.
Wesley—Moves to Quincy—Bainbridge—Conversion
of Judge Law.

THE Conference of 1852 met in Tallahassee. Bishop Andrew presided. Brother Graham was sent to California, and I was appointed to the Tallahassee District, which at that time embraced the western part of middle Florida and the southwestern part of southern Georgia, reaching to Albany, and from Fort Gaines down the Chattahoochee to the gulf. I have never met any better society or a more prosperous people than lived in the bounds of that district at that time. Albany was somewhat an exception, as it was a new town, and many adventurers being there just for a time. All that fine country was only being settled. The Methodists largely dominated the whole district, except Albany and Blakely. Those two towns were largely under the influence of the Baptists.

The good brethren of Tallahassee were anxious for me to remain among them, but the city was too far to one side of my district. There were no district parsonages in those days, and in the midst of all this wealth and refinement there was but one little shanty of a parsonage in the whole district, and that was on the Leon Circuit.

When I was a boy I thought George Washing-

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ton was a perfect man, patriot, and saint, and that it would be political sacrilege to call in question either his wisdom or piety. When I was a boy preacher I thought Mr. Wesley was perfection, and that any one who dared to differ with him ought to be put out of the synagogue. But I see things about men very differently now. Mr. Wesley did many wise things and many very unwise things. Among the many mistakes he made was in continually proclaiming to the Church and world that he and his preachers were not preaching for money, but for souls. His hobby of a free gospel, reëchoed by the Methodist preachers in America, pandered to the meanness and avarice of the people. He forgot or overlooked the fact that while he and his preachers were preaching for nothing the Church was having the gospel for nothing; that he and his preachers were making all the sacrifices and the Church was making none; that the poor preachers and their poor wives and helpless children were bearing all the burdens of the Church; that such teaching was subjecting themselves and their poor wives and children to very great humiliation and suffering. Such poverty and humiliation, instead of exalting the ministry in the estimation of the better classes, degraded them, and largely limited their influence to the classes of society like themselves. If the preachers had demanded a decent support for

themselves and their families, it would have given the ministers their proper influence among all classes. It has taken the Church a hundred years to get rid of Mr. Wesley's fanatical mistake. It was not for want of means or disposition on the part of the Church to provide for the preachers and their families, but a want of education and training. The Church really loved its poor preachers, and often pitied them and their poor wives and children. The preachers of this generation know but little about the poverty and privations of the preachers and their families of past generations. It was their own fault. But there were two sides to this question of keeping the preachers poor—it had a tendency to keep them pure, at least in purpose. For there was certainly no earthly outlook for a young man in the Methodist itinerancy.

I finally decided for the present to live in Quincy, as it was nearer the center of my district. I engaged board for my wife and two children with brother Steward, who was principal of the high school. There was an old Scotchman, a bachelor and an elder in the Presbyterian Church, who lived not far out in the country, but owned much real estate in the town, for which he asked a high price. He owned a lot on one corner of the public square with an old log cabin upon it which was an eyesore to the people of the town. He rented it for a grogshop. On my return from

a tour on the district I saw the new shop open. That night at the table, where there were about twenty boys and young men, I spoke of the new shop, and said if it was in some places the boys would tear it down. The boys glanced at one another. Brother Steward looked at me and shook his head, and wanted me to take back what I had said ; but I let the remark go for what it was worth.

After supper brother Steward came to me and said I would get him and his school into trouble ; that I had as good as told his boys to tear down the whisky shop. I told him the boys would not even think of it ; but the next morning the house was down and the whisky barrels in the ditch. Old man Forbes, who loved whisky, although an elder in the Presbyterian Church, came into town. When he saw his house down, he became wrathful and went to a lawyer. The lawyer took his case, but found it was no case. He went to the town council, but they knew nothing about it. One of the larger schoolboys came to me in trouble. I told him to keep perfectly silent, and when the worst came I would pay them out. The old Scotchman fussed around all day, but could get no proof, and left in disgust. We tear down pesthouses and burn them ; why not tear down and burn a whisky shop ? It is the worst kind of a pesthouse.

I would gladly have remained in Quincy, but

my salary was too small. There was a comfortable house in the country, just about the middle of my district. My wife had never lived in the country. The neighborhood was one of the best, filled up with a fine class of good old South Carolina planters — Munnerlyn, Wright, Bruton, Keen, old Colonel Williams, and brother Munnerlyn, whose good son still lives. They largely supplied the parsonage. Our furniture was of a primitive order, except the fine wool mattresses. Our bedsteads were of the carved style, always gravitating to a common center. We spent nearly four years at that place. By those who knew me, and of the work done on the district, I have received lasting praise. Much of our success in this life, after all, is dependent on our environment. There had been no general revival on that district in about fifteen years. A whole generation of young people had grown up out of the Church, and the entire district was ripe for the harvest.

Bainbridge was the hardest place on the district. We had a small church building. The town was at the head of navigation on Flint River, and was the largest village in that part of the state. For more than twenty years the people had been preached to occasionally by Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, but all their efforts were without fruit. There were but two Church members in the whole town. One was

a Methodist—brother Allen, afterwards judge, and old brother Hebbard, a Presbyterian. There were four women in the Church. The Presbyterian minister from Florida had stirred up the people, but finally concluded to preach a doctrinal sermon and broke up his meeting.

My wife was still in Quincy. My quarterly meeting was at Fordstown, eight miles from Bainbridge, and twelve miles from Quincy. Colonel M. came to Quincy to see me, and told me that we could not give up Bainbridge, that it was the county seat and the center of the whole country, and that I must go on Sunday night and begin a protracted meeting. Brother Choice, an old and experienced preacher, was on the circuit. I sent him word to put the iron in the fire and blow steadily until Sunday night, and not to touch it until I came. When I reached Bainbridge all things were ready. At the first service we had crowds of mourners around the altar. The same strange divine influence that I had on the St. Mary's District came upon me again and remained with me for over three years. I opened the door of the Church, but no one joined. I continued the meeting and opened the Church again, and learned that in the large crowd at the altar there was but one young man who had been brought up a Methodist. I met brother C. the next morning, and he asked me what I was going to do. I told him I had put

out my washing ; that there was but one hope for Methodism, and that was to get the people converted. All who were converted would join the Methodist Church, and all who were only convicted would join some other Church.

By the next Sunday we had thirteen converts and thirteen additions to the Church. I was standing on the street talking with brother Allen, when I saw a man coming up the street. I asked who he was. It was Judge Law. I said, "I will take him into the Church; introduce me." Brother A. laughed, and said I did not know him; that when he got drunk he would get his double-barreled gun and scare the whole town. He came up, and brother A. introduced me. I found him sober, and an educated, intelligent lawyer. I asked him around to my room, whereupon he invited me to take tea with him. I accepted his formal invitation, and said I would take tea that evening. I did not know that he drank, and treated him as a gentleman. When time for church service arrived I said we would go, and he went with me. His wife was a nice lady. He came regularly, and finally went to the altar. He sought a private talk with me, and said that his father was a Baptist preacher; that he was converted and joined the Church when a boy. He had sinned against parental instruction, against experience, against light and knowledge, and now he could see no hope. He was about thir-

ty-five years old. He made a strong case against himself. I urged him to press on, although it did look like a forlorn hope.

One night brother West, from the Tennessee Conference, preached from the text, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Before brother West was through preaching I saw the judge's countenance all changed and lit up with joy. He came to me. I said, "A grand sermon!" "Oh," said he, "a grand text! My mind and soul grappled with it as soon as he announced it, until I saw my salvation embraced in the words 'all things.'" I again took tea with him. He said he had read all the books on predestination that came within his reach, and that all of them contained a doubt, which left him in a state of doubt which he would be glad to get rid of. I told him I would solve all his doubts—to come with me into the Methodist Church and do right, and he would be sure of heaven without a doubt. He said he believed Methodism was the safest of all the doctrines, and he would accept it. He joined the Church, and was a model local preacher to the day of his death.

The judge's nephew, Fleming Law, who still lives to bless the Church, and who has often been a member of our General Conference, was converted at the same meeting. He was among the

few men that I have ever known to seek religion philosophically. He was at the altar the first night, when I preached from the text, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found." He came to me the following Thursday night and told me he had no feeling, that all his movements were purely mechanical. Saturday morning after preaching I asked him how he was. He said he was the same, no change of feeling. I was taken aback. He said he was still following my advice. I met him again in the afternoon, and saw he was affected. I asked how he then felt. He said he had been very deeply penitent, and expected to be converted that night; that he had made several mistakes in his prayer; that at first he had placed his finger on the text, "Blessed are they that mourn," but he found that he was not a mourner, and he turned over to the text, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden"; but he said he found that he was not heavy laden, and had made another mistake. But that afternoon he had put his finger on the right text: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." He said he put his finger on that text and prayed for the grace of repentance, and it had come into his heart. He was most happily converted that afternoon.

Our meeting went on for three weeks. About fifty of the best people in the town were added

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to the Church. That was our first battle and grand victory on the district. I preached as presiding elder forty-seven times that year in Bainbridge. The work begun so successfully was genuine, and went on from year to year.

My next attack was on Albany, a hard place in more respects than one. Our church was several hundred yards out of town, in an old house built before the town was settled. But my congregations were good and the meeting opened well. Our success in Bainbridge had its effect upon Albany, and the meeting was not much disturbed. The wealthiest merchant in the town, whose wife was a nominal member of the Church, took offense at some of my preaching. His wife was connected with one of the most noted families in Georgia. The next night I denounced parlor card playing and dancing. Sister H., the wife of the merchant, took offense, and when she got home told her husband that he was right in his abuse of me, and that I had insulted her; but when she made her complaint, the merchant, who was a man of good sense and, though not in the Church, knew what a good woman ought to be, took sides against his wife. He told her that her card and parlor dances were all wrong for a Church member, and if she pretended to be in the Church she ought to abide by its rules or withdraw from it. He said that I was right. Next morning I noticed a change in her dress and whole manner.

She had a sunbonnet drawn close about her face. At once she came to the altar, and was there from time to time. At last she was converted, and rose up and gave the church a scrap of her experience. She said that I had abused her from the pulpit, and she had gone to her husband for comfort; that he had taken sides with the preacher against her; that she then had nowhere to go except to God; and now she thanked the preacher and her husband for their reproof—that it had drawn her nearer to her Saviour; and she felt that both the preacher and her husband were right. She and her husband were my devoted friends. She lived long, and was faithful to God and the Church. She died only a few days ago, in the full assurance of a better life. She died poor, but happy. Her husband died years before she did.

Riches often take flight. What a wonderful change money makes in the lives of men and women! We are exhorted not to trust in uncertain riches. Where our treasure is, there will be our hearts also. A very large majority of those who make fortunes lose them before they die.

CHAPTER XI.

Conference of 1854—Bishop Kavanaugh—Returned to the District—Trouble on the Wakulla Circuit—Newport Experiences.

THE Conference of 1854 was held at Micanopy, the first one ever held in south Florida. The Indians had not long been removed from that part of the state. Micanopy was a small village, but had a fine surrounding country. The lands were rich, and well adapted to the cultivation of sugar cane and sea-island cotton. Many wealthy families from South Carolina had moved to that part of the state—Gore, Perry, Colonel Lightner, and others.

Bishop Kavanaugh presided. His elegant wife was with him. It was his second Conference, and he had not learned the full use of the gavel. The brethren were very anxious to make a good impression by the Conference on the community; but I felt with others that we had the wrong bishop for such a purpose. He was sick on Saturday night, and I hoped that he would not be able to preach on Sunday; but he was up and on hand Sunday morning. I purposely took my seat behind him in the pulpit, that I might supplement a feeble effort. He read well, prayed well, announced and read his hymns in fine taste, then announced his text: "But is now made man-

ifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." I thought, What a text for such a preacher! I was all impatient about results. One of his shoulders hung a little lower than the other. It was not long before I saw that lower shoulder come up, and off he went. I was anxious for him to repeat it; and soon that same shoulder went up again. It was not long before it went up and stayed up; and by this time I was sitting straight up. His description of the last night of the Saviour in the sepulcher—the last hour wasting away, the life of the world trembling in the balances upon the passing minutes before the resurrection, the receding darkness, the grandeur and glory of the rising light, with the rising body of the Son of God—was extremely grand. I felt like telling him to stop and let us catch our breath, and all take fresh hold. When he finished, I did not want to pray, and felt that I was a very small man, hardly fit to say grace in his presence. The bishop left his impress on saint and sinner. God does not judge men by their outer appearance.

I was returned to the district. There was no abatement to my spiritual power, nor was the zeal less fervent in the churches. There was nothing spasmodic about that work of the Spirit.

I held a quarterly meeting at Gregory's

Church. It was an old, dilapidated, rough-plank affair, supplemented with a log cabin without any flooring for the negroes. There was a goodly number of rich members. I told them that they had more respect for their horses and fine carriages than for their Saviour; that their stables and carriage-houses were finer and better than their church. They became very much offended. Old brother G., one of the stewards on the circuit, said if he kept his sight he did not care if he never saw me again. He sent up his share of quarterage to the next Conference, but did not go himself. I paid no attention to their wrath. Late in the summer I received a note from old brother G., saying: "The new church is done, and the new academy. When it suits your convenience, please come and dedicate the church." I made the appointment. I had never seen the church. When I got there they had cleared off about two acres and whitewashed all the trees. The church was painted white, with green blinds; so was the academy. All had been put up to order, and paid for.

The brethren met me with open hands, and I paid them a very high compliment, and dedicated their church. Brother G. invited me to dine; and such a dinner! It was complete in everything the country afforded. He laughed heartily about the brethren having gotten angry, and said they needed just what I had given them.

We were good friends ever after that, until his death.

I have no recollection of ever making a church angry by preaching the truth that it did not end well. It is more important that a preacher should in plain language tell the church of its faults than to praise it for its virtues; yet it is but just that the preacher should do both. We all love approbation; God places the highest value upon it.

One of the most thrilling and severe ordeals I ever passed through occurred in Wakulla county, about eighteen miles south of Tallahassee, at my quarterly meeting for the Wakulla Circuit. My friend brother Dyke, local preacher and editor of the leading journal of the state, went with me. I was not apprised of trouble on that circuit. There was no disturbance at the morning service. At night I put up brother Dyke to preach. About the time he closed, in walked seven men, some with hats on and others with caps; all had cigars in their mouths. I had no knowledge of why the devil had sent them there, or what were their intentions, but I knew it was for no good. While the congregation was praying, I stood up, determined that they should take no advantage while we were praying. After church, the moon shining, they mounted their horses and gave the order to run over me, but mistook me for another. The brethren grabbed sticks, and anything they could lay their hands

on, to defend themselves. I saw that I was the one they were after. They left. I was driving a fine mule. Brother Dyke and myself were going to spend the night with a brother who lived on the same road over which they went. We had not gone far when a brother came back at full speed and informed us that those fellows were just ahead at Dry Creek, waiting for us ; and that they had loaded their pistols and whetted their knives over at the turpentine mill that afternoon for the purpose of putting us through. I turned to brother Dyke and said that those fellows were drunk, and we did not even know them, and no possible good could come of having a difficulty with them ; that we might get hurt or killed for no good ; and I urged that we go back and spend the night with another brother who lived near by. But brother Dyke said No, and seized the lines ; that no set of scoundrels could push him off the track. So I consented very reluctantly, took the lines, and we went on. When we came in sight of the place, there they were, as we supposed, four of them on the ground and the other three on their horses. Brother Dyke began to shake, and asked me for my knife. I had just bought a very fine, large, long-bladed new knife. I told him No, I would use it myself. He said he would fight with a loaded whip I had. I saw he was not in a condition to meet so serious an issue, and opened my knife and in cold blood

decided to meet the issue alone. I knew an attempt to reason with them would be futile. It was simply a case of life and death, and I decided to kill as many as I could before they got ready. I knew I could kill the four on the ground before they could arrest me, by placing my long, keen blade below their ribs, and then take the chances with those on their horses. My plan of attack matured. Brother Dyke, though a brave man, I knew, had not taken in the very great danger of the situation. Just as I clutched my knife for its deadly work, and was in the act of leaving the buggy to make short work of the man nearest to me, the brethren spoke and said the roughs had gone on. Seven of the brethren had stopped when they came up to where those fellows were waiting, and they discreetly moved on. How thankful to God I was that the desperadoes went on their way!

The next day the whole neighborhood was outraged at the conduct of those men, and soon had out warrants and the sheriff after them. Some of the crowd came in and gave up; others left the country; but the main leader refused to be arrested, took refuge in an outhouse, and defied the sheriff and his posse. A kinsman of mine, just from Texas, was on a visit to his father's near by the scene. The sheriff sent for him, and he came on his Texas pony, with his fine shotgun across his lap. He asked the sheriff what he

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wanted with him. The sheriff told him that he wanted him to help him take that man in the door with a pistol in his hands. Richardson said to the sheriff, "Why don't you command me to take him?" The sheriff said, "I command you." Quick as thought, Richardson had both barrels pointing right at the fellow's heart. He said it was all up with him, and he surrendered. Richardson was a regular Texas Ranger. The sheriff disarmed the culprit, and soon took him off to jail. Court was in session, and the fellow was at once put on trial and convicted. The judge was a good Episcopalian, and hard on those who disturbed religious worship. The statutes of Florida at that time provided heavy penalties for such offenders—fines, imprisonment, and, if I am not mistaken, whipping. The judge put the fellow in jail for six months and imposed a fine of two hundred and fifty dollars. The condemned man was crushed by such a penalty. He told his lawyer that he was from Georgia, had a wife and two children and his crop on hand, and that he was ruined. The lawyer told him that all he could do now was to slip, and that he must do it quickly. When the sheriff was on his way to jail with his prisoner, the fellow bade him good-by and left for Georgia. The country around the village is a saw palmetto region, flat and level. The sheriff made a run for his prisoner, but the Georgian left him so far behind that he saw it was useless to

continue the race. He returned to the court and reported his prisoner gone. The judge threatened to make him pay the penalty of the escaped prisoner, when the deputy sheriff said, "May it please your honor, I declare to the court that there is not a deer in all this woods that could have caught him." Thus ended one of the most remarkable and exciting scenes in my whole itinerant life. I never did learn why those men acted as they did, or what they had against me.

While there were many excellent families in the county and good members of the Church, there were many not so good. Newport was the county seat, and all at a bound came into notice and of some importance on account of some fine mineral springs and a plank road which had been constructed from the interior of the country. I was a stranger to the people—really knew but one man in the place. I insisted on taking the third quarterly meeting to Newport. The preacher, brother Penny, objected, saying that he had tried every way to get the people out, and other preachers had tried, but they would not go out to hear the Lord himself preach. The brethren, however, voted the quarterly meeting to be held there. The time came, and I ordered two other preachers, the pastor and myself making four. We opened on Thursday morning with one woman and four preachers present. At night brother Mills preached, and seven men came, but

no woman. After he preached I told them that must be a bad town; that the people danced, had fish-fries on Sunday, sold whisky to negroes, and posted books and gambled on Sunday. I had heard of all these charges. While I was talking three of our congregation left, and presently another left. We then dismissed. Brother Penny, the preacher, came up and said I had but seven, and had run four of them off, and he was not going to stay for nothing. I told him to be patient, and we would see. Next morning Dr. W., the only man I knew personally, called as a Mason and warned me to leave the town, saying the principal citizens were then holding a meeting, and that I would soon get a note to leave the town peaceably, and if not, forcibly. I told him I would not get the note; that I was too important a man for them to write me such a note, and not to give himself any trouble or get into a difficulty on my account; that I would manage the whole trouble—it was just what I wanted, to give direction to the public mind and then control it. But the doctor and another person had a fight, and there were two more fights during the day. Brother Penny came and warned me not to go up town; said if I did they would tear me to pieces. I told him that they would not open their mouths to me; that I was the elephant, and no one would dare hurt the elephant. So I picked up my umbrella and walked leisurely

along the plank road up to the spring and back. All came and looked at me as I passed, but no one spoke. At night the house was crowded, and when I walked up into the stand all was still. I sang and prayed and preached one of the best sermons I had. I entirely ignored any knowledge of what had occurred during the day, just as if I had dropped down from the clouds. When I called mourners seven came forward, and among them one of the most prominent women in the state. I was in the crowd as they were leaving the church. Some of them said those fellows had lied on me, and that they did not believe I had said any such thing as charged; that I was a fine preacher and a nice man, and that they were going to my service every time. I heard nothing more of the committee, and there were no fights and no trouble about congregations day or night. We broke up the big ball that was soon to come off, stayed fourteen days, and added about thirty to the Church. We had a new church built.

I held a meeting the next year at the same place. The church opened on two streets, and had a porch. There was some disturbance on the porch—loud talking. I told the negroes to hush their noise. I did not know whether they were white or black, and didn't care; but they turned out to be some white men from Georgia. They said they had never been called negroes be-

fore, and would leave the church. There was a place in the back of the church for the negroes, and Sunday night I really thought they were talking, and ordered them to be silent. A brother went to the back door, then came back, and shook his head to signify that it was not the colored people. I supposed them to be some drunken sailors, and said, "Let the old drunken sailors alone." But still they talked on, to which I paid no attention. After preaching I started out the door where they were, when a local preacher came back and caught me, and said Dr. P. and the sheriff were at the door or steps with their pistols, and intended to shoot me. I told him I would give him my knife if they shot me. So I passed out, bade them good-evening, and went on. But I would not do that now. I would turn around and go out the other door. Young men, never go into a difficulty if there is a way to go out of it.

The sheriff left the town that night. They tried to arrest the doctor the next day, but he armed himself and stayed in his office. He was of good family, and his sister was in very great distress about him. She had my sympathy. A young man in his office was down town looking around for the police and seeing after his friend. I happened to remark in his presence, thinking about the doctor's sister, that they had better let the doctor up and pray for him, maybe he would

not do so again. When the young man went back to the office to report, the doctor asked, "But what did old Simon say?" The young man reported that I said they had better let him up and pray for him. Said he, "Unbar the door"; and down town he came. He met me, reached out his hand, and asked me if I would shake hands with as mean a man as he was. I gave him my hand, and told him I hoped he would quit drinking. He said, "I have drank my last, and will pay all expenses of my bad conduct; and I will be at the altar to-night." And he was there, and continued to come until he was converted. He married the daughter of brother R., a Methodist preacher. The last time I dined in that part of the state was at his nice home. He was still in the Church, and sober.

It requires the wisdom that comes from above for a preacher sometimes to know how or what to do; to know the mind of the Spirit, and to follow the cloud. I learned in the early part of my ministry that if I could control myself it was easy to manage others. Much of the secret of ministerial power is found in the fact that the preacher controls himself. Fasting and prayer are great helps to self-control.

CHAPTER XII.

Conference at Bainbridge in 1855—President of the Conference—A Mad Irishman—Protracted Meetings at Quincy—Coon Bottom—The Meeting at Concord.

THE Conference of 1855 met in Bainbridge. The new church was up and finished, and members enough had been added to the Church, from only one man to begin with, to entertain a Conference, and support a station preacher. The high water prevented Bishop Andrew from reaching the seat of the Conference for several days. I was elected president, and fortunately had been well trained in other organizations to manage the Conference. I was rather pleased with the position at first, and thought I could station the preachers all right. I had no trouble with some preachers and some appointments; but I soon waked up to the real fact that all the preachers must have places and all the works must have preachers. I began to have anxiety for many of the preachers and their good wives and children. I could not sleep. I would get up, and look all over the work and the appointments, to see if I could not better the condition of many of the preachers and their families. But the better place was not there, and the inevitable had to be met. It is certainly a debatable question wheth-

er any man ought ever to be placed in such relation to his brethren and the Church. It may be all for the best that the bishop does not know either the preacher or the place to which he appoints him and his family. Bishop Andrew arrived about the last day of the Conference; but the appointments were made, and he would not interfere, but read them out.

I returned again to the district. The same revival power continued. Much of the available material in Bainbridge had been worked up. Yet there were many strong men out whom we hoped to get in.

Quincy had been exceedingly unfortunate in her preachers, both in town and country. The Methodist and Presbyterian preachers in town, and the Baptist preacher near by in the country, all fell from the same cause. The Baptist preacher was run out of the country; and both the other preachers were Northern men, and left, and went north. It was remarkable how the fall of those preachers affected the churches and the whole community. They seemed to have lost all respect for the preachers, and all respect for their own religion. I was fully apprised of all the facts and the sad state of the churches and the people.

Brother Richardson, my namesake, but no relation, was appointed to Quincy. He was a man of sterling piety. I told him to keep away from

the street, and never to refer to what had happened in the past, but to visit and to pray and preach. I appointed a ten-days' meeting, and at once entered upon a suit for divorce for the Church from the world; and from Sinai and the Sermon on the Mount, for ten days and nights, I prosecuted the case until the whole town was stirred to its very foundations. One night at a late hour Dr. V. knocked at my door. I inquired what he would have. He handed me a note from Colonel Holland, a young Irishman who had been in the Mexican war, and a lawyer. The note demanded a public retraction or a settlement at the mouth of pistols. I was astonished at Dr. V., who was a gentleman, for allowing himself to bring me such a note. My wife was with me, and it frightened her. I told the doctor that I would see him at nine the next morning at Major S.'s office. He was on hand. In looking over the major's library, I found "Don Quixote," in several volumes. I selected two chapters, handed the book to the doctor, and told him to give it to the colonel to read where I had turned down the leaves. The doctor left with his dignity a little up. I heard no more of the colonel until he had armed himself and come to church to shoot me; but my wife and a young lady with me prevented him from executing his threat. The meeting went on.

The next I heard of the colonel was a con-

versation with brother G., an elder in the Presbyterian Church, a man of large means and influence, but always full of mischief and fun. He asked the colonel if he had met me. The colonel said he had not. Brother G. told him it was a blessed thing he had not; that I was a regular South Carolina fire-eater, and could take down a whole torch at a time, and had just as lief kill a man as look at him. He scared the colonel, and the next thing I heard of was a note stating that we were both Royal Arch Masons, and could not fight. Our good old uncle, Allen Turner, took the colonel into the Church, and he and I were good friends. He was appointed one of the United States judges under radical rule.

The meeting went on in the midst of the wildest excitement among both saints and sinners. I had during that meeting a strange, and to this day an unaccounted for, experience in praying. I lost control of my tongue and utterances. I could not control either. The prayer was simply awful. Several women screamed out—not shouting, but alarmed. Finally, that mysterious influence subsided, and my tongue became natural. I was myself alarmed, but I closed the prayer in a quiet manner. Some of the older and more substantial members came to me and begged me not to pray that way any more; and I never could, and never have.

I felt that I had gotten into strange latitudes,

and had some fears as to where we would finally land. The tenth day of the meeting had come, and there was no mourner or backslider at the altar. Sunday night came, and I announced my text from the prophet's vision of the valley of dry bones, "Can these bones live?" The simple announcement of the text swept over the whole church like a wave of light, and suddenly the storm we had been in swept by, and it seemed that earth and heaven had met together. Soon the whole church, lower floor and gallery, was a common altar. So powerful was the influence of that meeting on the whole town that I dared to appoint family prayer in every home—all to sing the same song at seven o'clock, and all the families to pray. There was a good, clever man not a member of the Church, but his wife was. She told me that when the people all over town began to sing her husband said, "Wife, pray; the whole town is praying and going to heaven, and we are left." She said she could not pray, but she hunted round and found a prayer book, and prayed the opening service of the Episcopal Church. What we need in this day is not learning, nor wealth, nor fine churches—we have all these—but we want power, and power that comes from God through the power of the eternal Spirit.

That grand meeting closed with about seventy additions to the Church, with a strange experience I never had before and have never had since.

Some who were then converted are yet living. There is one more incident of the meeting I must not leave out. Dr. Moran was a physician from the North who had come South for his health. He was a man of rare attainments—a modest, unassuming gentleman; but with all his learning and amiability, he was an unbeliever in Christianity—not an opposer of the Church. I had many talks with him, and he often came to church. During that meeting the girls and boys and young men in the schools were much interested. There was one young lady, or larger girl, the daughter of Judge McLenon. She was an earnest seeker. Her classmates and young friends had been converted and were happy, but she was still seeking. Many made her the special object of prayer. Her size and her earnestness had attracted attention. One night the meeting was running itself. Dr. Moran was seated a few pews back from the altar. I was talking to him, when all at once Miss Julia rose up and faced the congregation and exclaimed, “I have got it at last!” Her face was bright; she was happy, and showed that she was. The doctor looked at her intently for a short time, then hung his head and leaned forward on the back of the other seat. After a while he turned to me and said, “That young lady is converted.” I replied, “Yes, she is.” “Well,” said he, “if she is, that is true religion; and if that is true, all other religion

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must be false." Earth and hell are silent in presence of a genuine conversion. Conversion is the truth of Christianity made manifest in a life-form. One of the most important questions I could ask myself and the Church is, "Why are people not converted now as they were fifty years ago?"

Old Major N. came to me after the meeting was closed. He was not in a very good humor, because the meeting broke up the big ball that was to take place at his hotel. He said to me that the meeting did not accomplish anything very great; that I had only gotten fifty or sixty of the boys and girls, and only a few of the old stand-bys. I told him if I was to settle a farm with fifty or sixty old negroes, from sixty to eighty years old, in ten years I would be a beggar; but if I settled it with boys and girls from twelve to twenty, in ten years I would be getting rich. The old major could not meet the illustration, and I always insulted him when he talked to me on the subject of religion. He was about seventy, but his depreciation of my converts more deeply impressed me with the constant filling the ranks of the Church with the coming generation.

I was talking with some preachers about forty years ago regarding the future of the Primitive Baptist Church. I told them it would pass away in less than fifty years, and gave as a reason that there were no young men in their ministry. There can be no stronger evidence of the future

prosperity of the Church than to see it crowded with young men. The life of a church is not more than fifteen years on an average. Deaths, removals, and apostasies will so deplete it in that time that without accessions there will be but a weak guard left. Whatever else a preacher may neglect, he must not neglect the work of revival. Whatever may be said about revival converts, there are but few converts without revival power and influence. Nine-tenths of the Methodists were converted in revivals. I could wish it was otherwise, or rather that revivals were continuous. A live church ought always to have mourners in Zion. If there are no mourners in the church, the church may know she is living below herself. She is the salt of the earth, and the light of the world; but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? and if the light that is in the church be dark, how great is that darkness! It is a sad state for a church to be in—to be neither hot nor cold, neither dead nor alive. The Church is the Shekinah. God says, "I will dwell in you."

Without rest, I left Quincy for Coon Bottom, where I held a successful four-days' meeting, with many additions to the Church; and then on to Pisgah for a ten-days' meeting. I now look back with astonishment, and wonder how any man could stand such a constant mental as well as physical pressure of labor. Pisgah was one of

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the largest and wealthiest country churches in the state. It was located in the finest district of rich land in middle Florida. The population came from Virginia and the Carolinas; all were well-to-do, and some of them large planters. It was entirely a Methodist community. Three of the older preachers of the Conference came uninvited to my ten-days' meeting. We spent the day at the church, always having royal dinners. They were elegant people. The church house was a large old frame building. I saw that the church had drifted into worldly-mindedness, and that there was a want of spirituality and religious aggressiveness. At once I took in the whole situation, and determined to meet the issue. I promptly opened hostilities on the surroundings. Unfortunately, my older preachers took sides with the church people, and arrayed them against me; but I was the presiding elder, and held the reins. The church resisted all my appeals, and finally decided to ask the bishop to remove me. Colonel Bemby, the best man in the church, and a leader, came to me and told me I was the most unpopular preacher they had ever had on the district; that there were only about three members who would invite me to their houses. I told him I would venture the assertion that those three members held family prayers. The colonel replied that was true. I asked him how many heads of families held family prayers, and how

many families there were in the church. He got his book, counted up, and said there were sixty-five. The next afternoon I stood in the altar and told the congregation that they had said some hard things about me, and that I had said nothing about their decency or propriety; that I had only attacked their religious life, which, as their presiding elder, I had a right to do; but if I had misrepresented them, I would publicly apologize for it; that I had learned from one of their leading members that there were sixty-five heads of families connected with the church, and that if thirty of them habitually held family prayer, I would take back all I had said about their piety; and that I might make the apology, I would sing a few verses, and all who held family prayer would approach the front seats and receive my apology. I saw heads go down for the first time during the meeting. I told them I would change the proposition, and once more call for backsliders while we were singing. Before the hymn was half through the altar and front seats were crowded with backsliders; and before the hymn was ended all in the church were on their knees. I then told them that I was not now crazy, neither were they; that I knew there were but three families who held family prayer. After several prayers, I asked all the heads of families who would that evening take up the cross and begin family prayers to stand up, and we would pray

at home and have no night service. Strange as it may seem, all rose but one old South Carolinian, a Dutchman, who left the church, saying that God had never made a man that could run over him in that way; and yet his good wife influenced him to hold family prayer.

I appointed an experience meeting for the next morning, in which there were many interesting experiences related. One old brother, originally from Virginia, said he had been out there for years, making cotton, buying land and negroes, and backslid and did not know it; and that those preachers had neither the religion nor manhood to tell him of his faults. We had many similar experiences, abusing and condemning the preachers. The meeting was continued until dinner. As soon as dinner was over, all my older preachers left, and I was on my white horse and fully master of the whole field, with the entire army captured; and a subscription was started to build a five-thousand-dollar church, which was built at a cost of fifty-two hundred dollars, and remains in that beautiful grove until this good day. I was their presiding elder for seven years, and pastor for two years during the war. Those good brethren wrote me when I was in Alabama that if I would return to Florida they would pay my expenses and gladly have me for their preacher four years more, and help educate my children. I will say more about this excellent church further on.

We opened hostilities at Concord, another important church in the same circuit. I preached on the text, "Will a man rob God?" I said that there were men who would not only rob God, and men, but would steal from a negro by waking him up before day and taking his God-given time to rest; that there were men low enough down to steal from a mule. Just look at that lot of poor mules with the flesh plowed off of them! There was a prominent planter and Baptist in the congregation who took offense, and said to a member that I had lied on his mules, and that he ought to have risen in church and set himself right; that I had no right to accuse him of stealing from his poor mules; that they had not had the flesh plowed off of them, but that he had fed his mules on rotten ship corn, and that was the cause of their being so poor. I had never seen his mules, and knew nothing about them. When you draw a man's picture, he is very apt to recognize it. The power and efficacy of preaching is in the direct application of it. Nathan said unto David, "Thou art the man." Sin is not generative or imputative, but always personal. Mind, your sin will find you out. It is on your track. The officers of the law and the most experienced detectives may fail to find you, but your sin will find you if you are beyond the seas or in the clouds, or if you make your hiding place in hell.

CHAPTER XIII.

Conference at Quincy in 1856—Bishop Capers Presiding—Prosperous Times—Revival at Tired Creek—Church at Blakely—Fears of Consumption.

THE Conference of 1856 met in Quincy. Bishop Capers presided. The Conference was moving rapidly to the front. The older preachers were in the lead, doing effective work. The younger men were enlarging their sphere of influence. The brothers Branch, Glover, and others, were filling the best appointments. The Conference was being reënforced with choice men from the older Conferences.

Dr. O. L. Smith was one of the best all-round men I ever knew, modest as a woman and brave as St. Paul. Dr. Anderson was a man of culture, a fine preacher, scholar, and writer: he still lives to bless the Church. Dr. Plummer, transferred from the Tennessee Conference, was a model man and preacher. Dr. West, from Tennessee, spent some time in Quincy. Brother Tragg, transferred from the Kentucky Conference, was a man of great worth.

The population was rapidly increasing—the very best people coming from Virginia and the Carolinas. Those were times of prosperity on all lines. I doubt if there were a happier, more contented people on the whole continent. The

colored people had plenty, and the gospel was everywhere preached to them.

As presiding elder, I gave much time to church building, and central schools, and parsonages. My plan was to have a Methodist school attached to every church. This grand movement had the hearty coöperation of all the preachers and churches.

The work of revival went on alike in winter and summer. Many young people had been converted, and the revival power was so great that scores of the old hard cases were reached and converted and brought into the church. A genuine revival is the thing to reach the masses, and it never fails to do it.

I had held a quarterly meeting in South Gadsden Circuit, and on my way home held my quarterly meeting in Quincy. The preacher and brethren insisted that I should remain and hold a protracted meeting in Quincy. All the available Methodist material was about worked up in Quincy, and I determined to go home, but to put the responsibility of leaving on the sinners of the town. When Sunday night came, I decided to make a proposition for penitents, which I knew no one would accept, and I would leave and go home. I proposed that if a dozen men and women, while I was singing only two verses, would come to the altar and agree to do as I told them, I would protract the meeting and

stay until they were converted, and that they should be the judges of their conversion. To my utter amazement thirteen came—four Episcopalians, two Presbyterians, and the leading Episcopal lady in the state among the number. I was compelled, on my own proposition, to continue the meeting. I appointed preaching morning and night, and prayer meeting for the afternoon. I was staying with Judge Dupont, one of the chief justices of the state, and a thorough Methodist. He said that my proposition was new to him, and that he was astonished that any one accepted it. I was more astonished than he was, and in much more anxiety and trouble about it. I would gladly have taken it back, but I was in for its results; and there was but one way out, and that was to get them converted. I spent much of the night in prayer to the Lord to help me out of the difficulty in which I had rather dishonestly placed myself.

All my mourners and a full church were on hand Monday morning. The mourners all came to the altar, but with no signs of repentance expressed in their faces. I went on with my meeting until Wednesday, when I decided to get rid of my Presbyterian and Episcopal mourners by opening the door of the Methodist Church, and their refusing to join would be a violation of contract and let me out. But they all came and joined the Methodist Church.

My meeting increased in spiritual power. I proclaimed a general fast. Saturday night at a late hour seven of my mourners were gloriously converted. The good judge stayed by me, and now changed his mind; he said they might have known they would be converted if they did as I told them. I closed the meeting Tuesday night. All my mourners were converted except one woman, and she was sick; and I was on my white horse. Strange that I should have been so troubled, when I had only indorsed God's promise. I would now make such a proposition and never lose a minute's sleep. Conversion is not a myth or puff of wind, but a divine promise and personal reality that cannot fail when all the conditions are met.

Soon after that occurrence I had a similar observation and experience. I had a very dear friend, a clever man, about forty years old, but out of the Church. His wife was a nominal member. His house was often my home in traveling around. One night I told him that I wished he would join the Church. He said he had no feeling, and had not had in nineteen years; but if he ever had again, he would act. I told him I could prescribe for feeling, and if he would take the prescription he would soon have all the feeling he needed. He asked me for the prescription. I told him that he must first change his purpose to do right at any cost,

but that he could not fully do without divine aid, which God would give if he would get on his knees and ask for it; that I was going to have love feast in the morning and call up mourners or all who wanted to become mourners, and that he must come to the altar; then I would open the door of the Church, and he must join. He replied that he had no feeling. I told him I was prescribing for feeling; that he must first dig his well before he drank his water; that I would baptize him and give him the sacrament, and then he must pray in his family; and if he had no feeling after taking my prescription, he might publish me as a false prophet. I did not suppose that he would at once enter upon the advice I had given him; but before retiring he knelt at the foot of his bed and began to pray, and after praying a while he told his wife that he was feeling very badly. She replied that she was glad of it. He prayed on, and finally told his wife that he would be lost, and to wake me up; but she refused to disturb me, and got up and prayed with him. He remained prostrate on the carpet until a late hour, when he said, "Mary, I am going the whole amount to-morrow." She did not know what that meant, but he did—that he was going to take all the prescription; and he did, and made a noble member of the Church for about four years, and died a triumphant death.

My Tired Creek bush arbor protracted meeting

was a many-sided conflict. Brother Kennedy was the circuit preacher. A truer, nobler, braver man I never knew. His good wife, who still lives, was a power in the church. She was the noble daughter of the old captain who attempted to prove that I had never been born again. We opened our protracted meeting on Friday and preached until Sunday without any apparent results. I told the church that certainly there must be a golden wedge or Babylonish garment somewhere hid out, and that I would make a search for them. An old and favorite proposition of mine was to call up the church to pray and let bygones be bygones. It is a good and short way to settle minor church difficulties. I invited to the altar all who had no unkind feeling, and all who had, to pray and let bygones be bygones. Not a single one came. I knew not of any of their difficulties. I asked if the devil had gotten into the whole church. I then sang another verse or two, but no one moved. All was still, when a stalwart sinner rose and said to his brother Joe, "Here is my hand." His brother was a local preacher. "For it is a shame the way we are all going on here at Tired Creek." This move broke down the whole crowd, and all came forward to the altar, saints and sinners. After meeting, they all laughed and made friends, and wished all the fish-traps in the creek were washed away. They had three

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sets of traps in the creek, one above the other, and all the neighborhood was in the trap business, and all involved about stopping up the creek and not letting the fish pass. This same big sinner had been at the altar, but one morning I found him going back in his carriage from the arbor. I asked him where he was going. He said he was going home; that he was feeling worse instead of better all the time. I told him to let his wife and children come; but in a day or so he was back at the arbor, and soon clearly converted.

I spent a night with a prominent old citizen in the neighborhood, who had been brought up in the Primitive Baptist faith. I told him it was time now for him and his good wife to get religion and join the Church; that their children were grown up and needed their example. The old man threw his hands up to his ear as if in a listening attitude and said he had been listening for that voice for forty years. I asked him if he had ever heard it. He replied that he had not. Then I told him that he had been waiting long enough, and it was time to look in some direction; that he was a man of sense in all other things, and why not use his common sense in his religion. I urged him to come over to the arbor meeting, go to the altar, and tell the Lord that he was a poor old sinner; and that God could shuck him out of his sins in ten minutes.

The old captain came, and sure enough the second day he was converted and going around shaking hands with the brethren.

I had a strong attachment for the Blakely Circuit, having traveled it in my younger days. Brother Ira L. Potter, uncle of Dr. Potter, was on the circuit. We never had a church in Blakely until Major Cook—who was a Presbyterian, and his wife a good Methodist—and Dr. Holmes, who died in Rome, built a large frame house on one corner of the public square. I appointed a ten-days' meeting to be held in the new church. The good Baptist brethren and myself were always on the best of terms. Brothers Mills and Kennedy were with me.

On Sunday morning I opened fire on the whisky business. The hotel keeper and a prominent Methodist had a grocery store in which they sold whisky. They became much offended at my remarks. The leading man in the community and Baptist Church came to me and said that was the preaching the town needed. The next day the hotel keeper sought to have a difficulty with me, which at some sacrifice of feeling I avoided.

There were many young men and girls out of the church. The young men said that there was no religion in the town; that the church was a mere political and mercantile machine. I told them to be careful; that I would hold them responsible for slandering the church. When

night came, I told the church how the young men had slandered them; that they said there was not a family altar in the town. I asked all who held family prayer to come to the front, and I would expose the young men and put a padlock on their mouths. But no one came. I then asked all who held family prayer simply to rise up; but no one rose. I then asked if it was possible that the young men were right in their judgment of the religion of the town, whereupon my leading citizen and Baptist brother rose and left the church, and about fifty more followed him. There I stood. Brother Potter and the other preachers looked alarmed. After the crowd of church members left I turned to the young men and said according to their own judgment the church had no religion, and that they had none, and that they would all be damned in mass; but if they would approach the altar I would pray for them. Many of them came.

My meeting had drifted into strange latitudes. Next morning early I saw from my window the old captain going over to the hotel. I felt that he was intending no good to me. Soon I saw the hotel man and a boy coming to where I was staying. I said to myself that I had taken enough from him, and any further insult would be promptly met. He came up, reached out his hand, and said, "I take back all I have said about you." I replied, "All right." He asked for my

valise, and demanded that I should go to his hotel and spend the remaining time with him; said he and his partner had decided to put whisky out of their business. He told me that the old captain had been around to see him, and said he agreed with him that I ought to be run out of the town. He told him that he had thought so until the last night, and had changed his mind, and felt that he was in the presence of the grandest man and preacher he had ever seen; that I had dared to tell Captain W. and the church the whole truth. Strange what effect preaching the whole truth has in detecting hypocrites and convicting sinners.

Brother Potter preached Sunday afternoon, and moved the whole congregation. The storm that had been raging for days passed away, and we had smooth sailing the rest of the meeting.

That was the beginning of the Methodist Church in Blakely. The revival power swept all over the circuit. Strong men bowed themselves, and God in Christ was honored. My four years work on that district was drawing to a close. My physical strength was rapidly giving way under this long and powerful strain. I had had no respite during this long four years' struggle. The physicians were my personal friends, and had often urged me to stop, and gave me faithful warning of the coming danger; but I neither saw nor seemed to feel it, although right in the

midst of it. They all decided that I was nearing the last stages of consumption. I had a violent cough. All decided that I could not live longer than the coming spring. They were mistaken. I had no consumption, but had simply preached and worked myself to the verge of the grave.

Dr. Crane, the celebrated phrenologist, visited Tallahassee, and was practicing on lung diseases by inhalation. I did not know he was a phrenologist. I called on him, and asked to be examined. To my astonishment, instead of examining my lungs he examined my head, and told me so many facts which were only known to myself that he came near making a convert of me. I told him I wanted him to examine my lungs, which he did, and charged me ten dollars. I told him I would not at present take any more of his advice. He was a fraud, but a man of fine intelligence. He told me that I was simply run down like a deer, and that all I really needed was rest; to quit all medicine and books, and hunt and fish and use an ax in moderation, and I might react and get well; but to stop at once, and that was my only hope. I was inclined to accept his advice. I had never had time as a preacher to fish or hunt, or leave my work. My good, uncomplaining wife had stayed at home with the children and servants all those four years, and did her part well. I had but little

hope of living long, and set about providing a permanent home for my wife and children when I should be gone. I bought a large tract of land, nine hundred acres, near Quincy, and began to fix up the home for my family and servants. I wanted to move before Conference.

My friends all remonstrated against my movements. I was down at my place one day, helping my negro to build a lot fence, when a fine-looking man came riding by on a fine horse. He stopped at the gate, and asked who was building there. I told him the Rev. Mr. Richardson. "Yes," said he, "he is a very overbearing man; thinks he can run roughshod over the people, and, if he knew, has come very near getting the bark knocked off of him." I asked him if he had ever seen Mr. Richardson. He said he never had. I told him I was the veritable man. His face reddened, and he said no doubt I had been lied on. I was thoroughly amused at the fellow's mistake, and told him that he had just put his foot in the wrong place, and that there was but one way out, and that was to come and hear me preach the next Sabbath and give me five dollars for the church. He said he would; and he did. He became one of my best friends.

I had given to God and the Church four of the best years of my long life.

CHAPTER XIV.

Conference of 1857—Agent of American Bible Society—
After Two Years' Service, Resigns.

THE Conference of 1857 was held in Jacksonville. Bishop Andrew presided. I was appointed to the agency of the Bible Society for Florida and southern Georgia. After Conference I was soon in my new home; and having a young man, a good farmer and local preacher, to look after the farm, I was now free to go where I pleased. I supplied myself with gun, fishing tackle, and ax. It was a most agreeable appointment, except being so long from home. It gave me an opportunity to visit again all my old friends where I had been preaching for the past sixteen years. I soon learned that Dr. Crane was right. The gun, fishing rod, and ax were the best medicine for me. From the very time I began to use my gun, fishing rod, and ax my whole physical strength improved. And I would advise all persons who have lung or throat diseases to stay below the frost line and go into the country, live in an open house, and use the gun, rod, and ax—all in moderation. I have lived in Jacksonville, Augustine, Key West, Madison, Tallahassee, Quincy, etc. Indian River is a fine place for consumptives, and a pleasant climate both in winter

and summer. It is never as hot in Florida as it is in New York.

A man may do many things and make many mistakes, but when he is engaged in distributing the Bible he knows that he is not making any mistake. With all of our people's want of conformity to the teachings of the Word of God, yet all have a remarkable reverence for it, and will give to its circulation more willingly than to any other enterprise of the Church.

I was permitted again, after ten years, to visit Key West, and met a grand reception. I traveled from Albany to Key West, and from Jacksonville to Pensacola. I visited all the towns and villages. The American Bible Society was always liberal in its donations to the South. Brother Blache had been engaged as agent of the Society for many years, and did a good work. I preached often for the preachers, and aided them in their meetings. Quincy always made a good contribution to the Society. I asked the church on one occasion for two hundred dollars, in ten-dollar contributions. There was present an old man, a bricklayer, but a good man. He put down ten dollars. I only charged him up with one dollar, feeling that that was all he was able to pay. The next morning the officers of the auxiliary met, when in came old brother Tred-away with his ten dollars to pay his subscription. The Presbyterian minister was president of the

board. I told the old brother that I had only put him down for one dollar. He said No, he was going to give the ten; that the Bible was the bread of life to him, and fed his soul; that his old body that was almost worthless cost him a hundred dollars a year. The old man talked about the Bible and giving until he got happy and shouted. Brother Hendee, the Presbyterian preacher, said let him shout; that he had come honestly by it, and was the first man he had ever seen give until he shouted. Men often get happy when singing and praying, but I have seen very few who give until it makes them happy. God's blessing is certainly emphasized on those who give.

I visited Pensacola, a magnificent bay. There I saw for the first time a man who had been working under the water in a submarine armor. I saw the large diving-bell, and was invited to take a seat in it, but I got scared and backed out.

I visited Milton. I was traveling in a buggy and had been in the rain. I went to the hotel, put up my horse, and took an afternoon nap; said nothing to anybody but the boy who waited upon me. I knew no one. There was a local preacher in the town, and I called at his store to see him about my Bible work. He invited me to stay with him, but was to call for me after supper. At the supper table a young man, a lieutenant in the army, was very talkative, and abusive to

the ministry. I paid no attention to him. The lady of the house left the table in disgust. After supper I passed into the sitting-room. Two rough-looking fellows followed me, took their seats, and used ugly language. One of them said he had never been fool enough to join a temperance society. The other said he never was mean enough to be a saddlebags preacher. I paid no attention to them, but saw the hotel keeper standing in the back door. At that time my local preacher brother came to the door and waved his hand for me to come. I rose at once and went with him. As we turned the corner we heard a pistol and a crash, but went on. The next day I returned to the hotel to settle up, when the owner said I had kept his house in a ferment ever since I had arrived. I told him that was impossible, for I had not spoken to a soul but the boy who waited upon me, and only a few words to him. He said his wife had left the table, and that he had had a serious difficulty on my account. He asked me if I was a preacher. I told him I was. "Then," said he, "it is all right. I don't allow a minister to be insulted in my house." But if I had not been a preacher they would have had all their trouble about nothing. So much for behaving and looking like a preacher.

My health was much improved, and I consented to hold a meeting at Marianna, Fla., a nice

town and cultivated people. It was one of the most quiet and remarkable meetings I ever conducted. Salvation seemed to come to the town and the country for miles around. The people flocked to the meeting, and sought religion as they would have engaged in any other business. Among many others the judge of the circuit court came to the altar. I went to him and attempted to encourage him. He looked up at me and said he was a member of another Church, but had come in tumbling over the wall, and wanted me to help him back to the strait gate. I have often thought of how many there are in the Church who came in tumbling over old Bunyan's wall. Nearly one hundred people were added to the Church, some of whom remain until the present time.

In another town I was assisting the presiding elder and preacher in charge in a protracted meeting. One night I was preaching, and took up the colonel and his influence over the young men of the town in a camp hunt on the coast, with his jug and pack of cards. I showed the drunken, demoralizing effect upon the boys of the town. While I was drawing the colonel's picture, some one in the congregation spoke out and said that was Colonel P. I had no reference to any particular person, but was simply presenting a fact that had often occurred on the coast. Next morning the preacher in charge came to my room

very much excited, and told me not to go out; that Colonel P. was furious, and that he was a dangerous man; and if I would stay in, he would see the colonel and try to pacify him. I had gone out on the porch, when I saw the colonel coming around the public square. I told the preacher that I did not lie in; that there was no danger of the colonel's whipping me, and I would prove it. I picked up my cane and went out and met him; walked around the square and met him again. After dinner brother K. came to my room and told me the trouble was ended; that the colonel had learned that we were Royal Arch Masons, and we dare not fight. I told him that I was thankful for Masonry; that it had saved me from many a beating. I knew that no one but cowards ever fought women and preachers. They know the preacher's hands are tied, and that his profession bars his resentments. "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil."

I held a Bible meeting in Warsboro, collected about one hundred and twenty dollars, and organized an auxiliary society. I had the money in my pocketbook, and in company with the presiding elder and preacher was spending the time in my room after the meeting. I felt for my money, and it was gone. We got a light, went back to the place where the meeting was held, but saw nothing of the pocketbook. I knew who had stolen it, but had no proof, and concluded to say

nothing about it, for I had rather pay it than to be known as careless. We went back to my room, and there lay my pocketbook on the floor. It had dropped out of my pocket while I was leaning back. I had mentally accused an innocent man, and mentally I begged his pardon. We have no right to render a judgment in any case without sufficient evidence. Let all parties be regarded as innocent until they are proved guilty.

The Bible Society was represented by the noblest and purest set of men I ever had any dealings with. They paid me a thousand dollars salary and complimented me with another hundred dollars. My health was entirely restored before my two years' agency expired. I saw that I could not do the work of an itinerant preacher and run a plantation. Preaching is work enough for any one man. St. Paul urges Timothy to give himself wholly to the study and work of the ministry. I sold out at a large profit, and determined to go back into the regular work. We now had six living children, some of them large enough to go to school. I settled my family at Mt. Pleasant, a delightful all-round Methodist community. From my long experience and general observation, I knew that a light-weight ax is the very best remedy for all throat and lung diseases, dyspepsia and nervousness. I was brought up on a farm, and when not in school I was kept at work, but never learned to plow or cut with an ax, yet I

became an expert in both on my farm. It would be a good thing to have a few acres of land attached to our parsonages, in the way of medicine for nervous, dyspeptic preachers. While I had one of the best constitutions that falls to the lot of man, and inherited no form of disease from my ancestors, I learned from long and severe experience that a man could not run a four years' revival campaign without rest, and I determined never to make another experiment.

I have been often asked why I did not preach as I did in former years. I did not simply because I had not the physical ability. A great many people think that any feeble man can preach; and so he can, but it takes true manhood to preach against the delinquencies of the Church and the sins of the world. There never was a prophet or preacher sent from God to reprove the sins of the Church and world that did not have to meet with opposition and persecution. "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." It may be better that a preacher live but a short time and do his work well, than to live a long time and accomplish but little. I accomplished more in the four years I was on the Tallahassee District than I have accomplished in any ten years since, except the four years I was on the Union Springs District in Alabama. In all my bodily suffering and weakness, if my mind ever weakened or suffered I am not conscious of it.

Against the remonstrances of the Bible Society, I resigned my agency and determined to go back to the regular work. I don't know that I could have served God and the Church any better for two years than in the Bible work. I distributed and had distributed thousands of Bibles and Testaments among all classes. When we sow the word of God we know we are sowing good seed, and when we cast the bread of life upon the waters we know we shall gather a bountiful harvest after many days.

CHAPTER XV.

Conference of 1859—Elected to General Conference—Tallahassee District—Conference of 1860—Gadsden Circuit—Major in Army—Conference of 1863—Pisgah Charge—Death of Children—Conference of 1864—Agent of Educational Fund.

THE Conference of 1859 was held at Thomasville. Bishop Early was with us for the first and last time he ever attended that Conference. He was a commanding officer, sure enough. He called on me to pray, and I prayed for his age and infirmities. He reproved me for referring to his age and infirmities, declaring that he had no infirmities. His after movements proved that he had many. He stirred up the whole Conference, but treated me with marked deference. He asked me confidentially to redistrict the whole Conference and station the preachers for him, which I did. He was at war with the presiding elders, and threatened to dismiss the whole of them. We had a full-blooded Irishman in the Conference, who felt that he was "somewhat." He and the bishop soon locked horns, and the Irishman said if he could not be respected by the chair he would be glad to be excused from any further business in the Conference. The bishop excused him, telling him that the Conference could get along without him. Brother L. promptly took his seat outside the bar of the Conference. The statistics of the churches were

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called for. Brother L. refused to respond, stating that he had been excused from any other business in the Conference, and could not report. The bishop invited him back, but he would not come until the Conference voted him back. The bishop met his match in this Irishman, and never troubled him any more.

I was elected to the General Conference, and was on the Committee on Episcopacy. The Florida Conference sent up complaints against the bishop, and I was forced to represent my Conference. I was sure that the bishop really meant no disrespect to any one. His mannerism was more natural than artificial. The General Conference prosecuted the bishop, and he defended himself for about twenty days. The trial was solemn, laughable, and sometimes pathetic. He was unlike Bishop Capers. The Conference preferred charges against him. When he appeared before the Committee on Episcopacy, he came in with his hat in his hand; said he was full of mistakes, and if he had done wrong or wounded any brother, he was sorry for it. The committee excused him, and we heard no more complaints against the bishop.

I was again returned to the Tallahassee District. Brother Plummer had been on the district for the past two years. His first wife, a saint, had died a triumphant death and gone up to heaven. He did good work on the district, married again

and returned to the Tennessee Conference, where he worked until his death. I have always been deeply interested and affected to see a Christian die triumphantly. That closes all further discussion of the divinity of the Christian religion.

My return to the district gave me advantages on some lines, but disadvantages on other lines. The available material on the district had in many places been worked up. The people in mass had been converted and joined the Church. When a whole community of young people become interested on the subject of religion, the parents also become interested, and there is not much difficulty in keeping up the interest of the meeting. I was fully convinced of the value to the Church of building central schools and churches, realizing that one large, fine church and school could do more for the cause of religion than many little churches and schools. I have often been astonished at the strange movements of the Church in stressing the higher education to the utter indifference of the masses to the common children of the Church, as if it really made no difference who taught them so the few better and more wealthy classes got religious teachers. If the preachers and the Church had been true to God and their children, we might have a good school in connection with nearly all our churches. The Catholic Church has taught Protestants a valuable lesson on this line. I went on building larger and

more central churches and schools all over the district. We had here and there some good protracted meetings, but on a much smaller scale than in the years before.

I resolved on having a first-class female college located in Bainbridge, for the benefit of middle and the eastern part of west Florida and southern Georgia. The people generally favored the enterprise, and we soon raised thirty-seven thousand dollars, and put up a beautiful three-story brick building. We lacked only about ten thousand dollars to complete and get into the building. I had the amount partly pledged at Appalachicola and other important points. The college would have been opened the next fall. I will say more about it further on.

I was returned to the district the third year. At the close of that year (1860) the Conference was held in Monticello. Bishop Pierce was president. He decided to remove me from the district. Personally I was anxious for a change, but I had so many central churches and the college unfinished that I felt it would be suicide for me to be removed. I protested against my removal, but the bishop would not listen to any appeal. I was outraged, for I knew he knew nothing about the circumstances. I was appointed to the Gadsden Circuit, where my children were at school. I told the bishop that if he removed me I would never touch the college again ; that without me it would

never be finished, and he would be responsible for its ruin. It never was finished. After the war it was sold and the brick removed, and one of the finest enterprises of my life was defeated. The bishop in after years often told me that he made a mistake, and deeply regretted it.

I spent a delightful year and a half among my old friends on the circuit—a great respite from so much labor and care. The war came on, and the whole country was in the wildest excitement. Regiments were being formed for six months' service. The brethren were anxious for me to go as chaplain. I jestingly told them to elect me major, and I would command them and preach too. I had no idea of going to the war. I had been in the Indian war, and had enough of it. But to my astonishment they met and elected me major, and I had to go; for here came my commission, and with it orders to Appalachicola—six months' troops. Brother Fagg, a superannuated preacher, took my place on the circuit. When Conference met, I was returned to the circuit and to the post of major in the army—a rather complicated appointment. I preached to the soldiers every Sabbath morning and night; buried them when any of them died. Our battalion was increased to about twelve hundred men. We guarded Appalachicola and the adjacent islands. The general and all the field officers but myself drank. We had fine bands, and they frequently

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serenaded us. At that time we had general and regimental headquarters all together. One day the lieutenant colonel came to me and said I loved music, and the bands had to be treated. I told him I would not treat my father if he were to rise from the dead; but to show him it was not money, but principle, with me, I said if they would serenade me as a Christian and a gentleman, I would treat them as Christians and gentlemen. One evening he called at my room and informed me that both bands and a number of good singers would serenade me that night, and that I had better prepare for them. We had a fine cook. I told him to get several gallons of oysters and dozens of fresh eggs, and get up a fine oyster and egg supper and have it all ready by nine o'clock. About nine the bands and the singers came. They opened up at my room in full blast on that grand hymn,

Before Jehovah's awful throne,
Ye nations bow with sacred joy.

The moon was bright. Our headquarters were on the bay. The sound of the many instruments and fine voices swept out over the bay, and all the air seemed to be alive with music. The old general came to my door and knocked, exclaiming that he never heard anything like that. And I never did, before or since. They then sang in the same strains, "Home, Sweet Home." We had our supper, and the old general and all the offi-

cers pronounced it the finest serenade they had ever heard. God never deprives humanity of pleasure or delight, but offers always a higher pleasure. There are no songs like the songs of Zion.

We finally had to abandon the place. Our time was out, and I returned to my circuit. I had not seen my wife and children for the six months. My two brothers-in-law were in the navy. I had no brother; and while I was heartily in sympathy with the Confederacy, I felt that there were too many helpless women and children in the family for them to be left. I determined to go into the regular work.

Conference was held at Thomasville in 1863. Why we had no bishop I do not remember; but I was again elected president of the Conference, and appointed myself to the Pisgah charge, where I thought I would be quiet. But I had only been there a few weeks when the governor proclaimed that all males from sixteen to seventy should enlist in the state service. The Pisgah neighborhood was made up of the finest population in the state, and thickly settled. The Old Guards, as the company was called, met, and in my absence elected me their captain. I could not refuse to serve, so I was more or less in the war from the beginning to the end. There was an amusing occurrence. A fine-looking fellow came to the parsonage claiming to be a Methodist preacher from

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Baltimore, and I put him up to preach. I saw he was in the wrong place and knew nothing about preaching; and besides, he called the Methodist stewards and class leaders deacons. I became fully satisfied that he was a fraud, and sent for a corporal and guard and sent him to jail. When they started off with him, he asked me if I had had him arrested. I told him I had. He asked me why, and I told him that he was reared a Baptist; that there were no laymen in the Methodist Church who were deacons; that he had not learned the language of Zion, and therefore I would send him to jail. He could make no reply. It was just before the close of the war, and he was never tried.

We built a nice parsonage and fine academy. I spent two most pleasant years, only we had much affliction. My two little baby girls died, and they sleep in that beautiful graveyard where many of my best friends rest in hope of a glorious resurrection. When the time comes I would love to rest with them. Sweet little ones, we loved them much, and long mourned their absence; but now that I have seen the perils and dangers of life, I thank my heavenly Father for kindly taking them from the evil to come. To me they are still my little lambs, safe in my Saviour's arms. What a glorious doctrine is immortality! Thanks to that blessed Saviour who has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel! There

was not a man, woman, or child at Pisgah or Concord old enough to join the Church that was left out. It is a most delightful state of things where all the people are in the same Church.

We were holding a meeting at Concord church. I told Dr. Leonard that we had gotten all but young Bond, and I expected to get him. The doctor said not if I had heard him after church abusing me. He said when he was a boy he thought I was the best man in the world; but now he thought, with an ugly adjective, that I was an old hypocrite. I told the doctor that we would be sure to get him; that he was right, only he had made a mistake in the man; and when he got by himself, he would find that he was the hypocrite and come to the altar. And so he did the next day, and was converted and joined the Church. Dr. Leonard is of sacred memory. He is now old and superannuated in the South Georgia Conference.

Our Conference in 1864 was to be held at Monticello. We still clung to the hope of the final success of the Confederacy. A truer, braver set of men and women never lived. When Conference met we had no bishop, and I was again elected president. Our Conference then numbered about one hundred and four preachers, and was in all respects a strong body of men. There was no division or discord among the preachers. We were nearly all dressed in homespun. The

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year before I had moved only a few of the preachers. They had their little gardens and farms, and were trying to make a living. As we had no bishop, and the General Conference had failed to meet, I decided that the General Conference was now inoperative, that the Annual Conferences had the right to manage their own affairs, and that I would appoint preachers to the same work for three years. I did not want to move them. But the Conference, by a very small majority, overruled me, and I had to change nearly all the preachers. I was again elected to the General Conference.

The Episcopalians and Presbyterians decided with the Methodists to do something to educate the children of the soldiers. General Bailey was chairman, and the richest man in the state. He said if I would accept the general agency and manage it, he would head the list with twenty-five thousand dollars. I accepted the agency, and appointed myself to it.

I have always regretted having left the Florida Conference. The preachers and Church never missed an opportunity to do me honor. Young men can afford to change their Conference relations, but older men wrong themselves when they leave the churches for which they have lived and labored.

CHAPTER XVI.

Residence at Madison—Close of the War and Hardships—Oath of Allegiance—Bible Agent Again—Leaves Florida.

FOR the first time we had the privilege of moving on a railroad from Pisgah to Madison. I hired out my negro men on the railroad. With all our courage and sufferings, we now began to have fears of the final overthrow of the Confederacy. Soon the crisis came, and we heard that Lee had surrendered to General Grant. We were slow to believe it, but finally had to accept the inevitable. Upon the surrender came the proclamation of the freedom of the negroes; and last, but not least, we were put under martial law, and garrisoned and ruled by a company of free negroes. The little captain was a man of white skin, but his heart was blacker than the negroes he commanded. This was the darkest shadow, or I may say the darkest night, that ever passed over my life. I had a good wife; she had been a true patriot, and bore the privations of the war without a word of complaint. We had six children; all were clothed in homespun.

When I got the full consent of my mind to give my life to God as a Methodist preacher, I also got my consent never to marry and subject any

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woman I might love well enough to be my wife to the homeless privations of a Methodist preacher. I kept my promise for over six years. But when I did marry I determined to guard against poverty for my wife and children.

I had learned all about the orange culture, and intended to plant a large grove outside of the frost line; but the Indians still occupied all that part of Florida south of the frost line. In 1859 the Indians were removed to the West. I had selected the neighborhood of the Manatee River to locate my grove. As soon as the Indians left I began to dispose of all my land, buy more negroes, and get ready to have my grove planted. By 1862 I had sold out, and largely invested in Confederate, Georgia, and Florida bonds, but kept my negroes. When the war ended I still owned my old parade horse, but all else was gone—land, negroes, and bonds. My agency went up, and I was left poor indeed.

I had bought some corn and a small supply of country bacon, which, with my large family, was being consumed. I offered to do any kind of work. I was driven almost to beggary. There came along a Northern cotton buyer. He was anxious to go from Madison to a town in Georgia that night, and said he would give ten dollars to be taken there. I told him that I would take him. Colonel Livingston took me to one side and said surely I would not do a thing of that

kind. I asked him if he had any money to give me, and he said he had not. I told him I had none. The fellow came around, put down his valise, and told me to put it in the buggy. I told him to put it in himself. He got in, ordered me to sit farther and drive up. I told him I would "land" him. We had not gone far when he began to sit farther and became very respectful. When he paid me he wanted to give me twenty dollars instead of ten, but I was too much of a rebel to accept anything from a Yankee. That was the first money I had after the war.

There was a Confederate captain who had kept a wagon and an ambulance, which he was very anxious to sell. I bought him out with Georgia and Florida bonds, and soon sold my wagon and four mules for three hundred dollars, and my ambulance for another hundred; and I was just saved from begging. I sold my fine horse for one hundred and fifty dollars more. The negro garrison began to forage around on the country. The brethren came to me and asked me what they ought to do. I told them to bushwhack them. They made a few shots at the negroes, and that kept them close in their quarters.

On one occasion I was sitting with my wife on the porch, when two stalwart negro soldiers appeared at the gate, and said they were going to get water. My wife told them that they had already drawn so much water out of the well that

it was muddy. They told her to shut her mouth, that they were United States soldiers, and would get water when they pleased. I had a large yellow dog lying in the walk. I told them I would make a hole in them big enough for that dog to jump through before they got any more water out of my well. They had on their side arms. I went for my gun, but my little boys had it out hunting. By accident I had gotten a fine sword cane. I picked that up, but when I came out the negroes were double-quicking to their headquarters. Rashly I went right up to the courthouse. When I reached there, about fifty negroes were loading their guns, and the little captain was pounding the table. When I came up he said I had set a magazine on fire, having threatened to put a hole through his soldiers large enough for a dog to jump through. I told him that was only poetry; that his negroes had insulted my wife, and that if he should come to my house and insult my wife I would make a hole through him. He had addressed me as Colonel, but when I loosened the sword in my cane he looked me full in the face and said, "Elder, I don't want a difficulty." I told him neither did I, for he had the advantage of me, but that I would sell out very dear. He ordered his negroes to their quarters, and said they should not disturb me any more. He and I became friendly, and afterwards talked over the trouble. I asked him why he dropped

the colonel and took up the preacher. He said he wanted to avoid trouble. I told him that he did not know when I loosened the sword in my cane that he was in less than a half mile of hell; that if he had made any move I would have run the sword right through him, and made my escape.

I did not like the sword part of my cane, for I had come near using it the second time. A Swedenborgian friend came to me and said he had a vision about that cane, and that I had better get rid of it; that he foresaw it would get me into trouble. I did not put much confidence in his foresight, but got rid of my cane.

The little captain issued an order that no rebel should preach unless he took the oath of allegiance and prayed for the President. I was the only preacher then present in the town. Colonel Livingston, a true Methodist, came to me and advised me to take the oath and let us have preaching. I told him I did not feel like it, and did not want to do it. Saturday afternoon came, and the colonel called again. At last I consented, and we went around to the captain's office. I informed him that I had come to take the oath, but that I would do it with mental reservation. He said then if he were me he would not take it at all. I took the oath square, and am being reconstructed as rapidly as the nature of the case will allow; and while I am not fully reconstruct-

ed, I am making the very best of it that I can. The first thing a rebel against God ought to do is to take the oath. He may reply that he doesn't want to do it, and more, that he doesn't feel like it, and that he doesn't want to be a hypocrite. There is no necessity for being a hypocrite. Men are doing all the time what they don't feel like doing and don't want to do. Men get up cold mornings and go to work, when they neither want to nor feel like doing it; but they do it because it is their duty. Take the oath without mental reservation. Don't leave out your heels or your jug, and make yourself the best Christian you can. You will find in the long run that you have made a good bargain. Christ says, "My yoke is easy, and my burden light."

I prayed for the President; that the Lord would take out of him and his allies the hearts of beasts, and put in them the hearts of men, or remove the curses from office. The little captain never asked me any more to pray for the President and the United States.

The Southern people never had anything against the constitution or flag of the United States. It was the majority who oppressed the South in the administration of the government that the South rebelled against. After Lincoln's election the South was left to do one of three things—never to hold another office in the government, to set their negroes free, or to fight

their way out of the Union. Like brave, honorable men, they chose to fight, and I think they were justified in doing it. I have never been convinced that they did wrong, and I now see no justifiable reason why they ought not to do it again.

When the South spends her surplus capital in mining and factories of all kinds, which she is doing, there will be no more war between the sections. Only the Northern states will see their very great political error in changing the labor of the South. There may be war sooner or later between the East and West. The time is not far distant when the South will be the peer of England and the North in manufacturing and shipping. The negroes can be utilized in the mines and factories and shipping. The sooner the South diversifies her labor the better. We have too many farmers and merchants, and too few mechanics. What the South most needs is a class of educated mechanics, who know how to manage capital and develop the resources of the country. It takes wisdom and time to make radical changes. The Southern people will never forgive the oppression of the North in the insults offered to their bleeding, conquered manhood. If there is anything grand or noble in any people, they will show it to a noble, brave, fallen foe. When a foe lays down his arms, that is the end of strife with chivalric, brave men.

Having been Bible agent for two years, the American Bible Society asked me to accept an agency again. To me it was a timely offer. I expected to be appointed to the same field, but instead was appointed to Alabama and west Florida. I visited Alabama before the meeting of the Florida Conference, which was to be held in Madison. On my return from Alabama I met Bishop Pierce and Dr. Capers on their way to Conference in Albany. We took the stage for Monticello. On our way, far out in the pine-woods, a poor girl came out and asked us if we had any dinner left to give it to her. She looked poor and hungry. I asked her about her condition. She said that her father and brother were killed in the war, and that her mother and sister were left alone, and that they had about eaten up all they had. I told her I would give her two dollars; the bishop said he would give two, and Dr. Capers said he would give one. I asked the owner of the stage to help. He said, "Let them go to work." I told him there was nothing they could do; but he refused. He had a fine span of horses. When we reached Monticello one of his fine horses took sick and died, and I did not care if it did. During Conference a young man, an old college student of the bishop's, and a good friend of mine, came to me and said he suspected I was short of funds. I told him I was very short. He said, "Maybe the bishop is short

also." I told him that he was. The young man's father had sold a large amount of cotton, and he handed me two bills, one for me and the other for the bishop. I handed the bishop his bill, twenty dollars; mine was the same. I told the bishop that we ought to have given that poor girl five apiece, and we would have got back fifty instead of twenty. The Lord always pays. Maybe not always in kind, for we may not need that; but he will pay up in full with what we most need. During vacation my two little boys picked some cotton, and made a little money for themselves. A poor blind negro came along begging. The smaller boy gave him a nickel, and wanted his brother to give ten cents, which he refused; said he had worked for his money, and let the negro do something. When I came home the smaller boy told all about the transaction, and that he had told his brother that the Lord would soon pay them back. I told him that he was just right; the Lord always paid, and that I then had his nickel in my pocket for him. I gave him the nickel, and he soon met his brother and told him he had got his nickel back; but he expected to get two for the one he had given. The apostle advises to give not expecting to receive again.

The Church in southern Georgia and Florida was well off before the war, and was taking good care of its preachers, and the Conference was constantly receiving reinforcements. Brothers

Duncan, Kennedy, Capers, and others had lately come to the Conference. The country and towns were largely dominated by the Methodists. The war left the country with many of her best citizens sleeping on many battlefields, to come back no more. The whole country was poor, and many of the preachers, with their increasing families, were forced to find more thickly populated Conferences. I had saved enough to feel able to preach without that constant dread of want and care for my family. I tried to make money not to quit preaching, but to be able to continue to preach and educate my children. No man has a right to bring children into the world and turn them loose in ignorance and poverty, to live a life of humiliation.

Bishop Pierce very reluctantly appointed me to the Bible Agency. I did not transfer, and only intended to make my stay for a year or two, and then return. I never intended to leave the Conference. I had spent twenty years of my manhood in Florida and southern Georgia. I came up with the growth of the country, and my whole preacher life was identified with the country and the Church and people. I had received many of the people into the Church, married them, baptized their children, and buried them when they died. There are certainly some very great advantages in the settled pastorate. It

may have some drawbacks, but it has many advantages.

I was devoted to all the preachers. A nobler, more self-sacrificing set of men I never knew. We had labored side by side to save the people and build up the Church. We had preached and prayed, wept and rejoiced together. Our interests and hopes were one. They conferred all the honors on me they had to give. I have no reason to complain. I have always been kindly received and kindly treated wherever I have been, and specially by Methodist preachers; but somehow I always felt that Florida was my home, and always intended finally to return. But thirty years have melted away since I left, and nearly all my old friends are gone, to come back no more. Shall we meet again, or is that fond hope an elusive dream? Why, then, all these strange feelings of ties of love and friendship here, if there is no meeting in the great hereafter? What are all these ties of blood and kindred spirits here, why all this labor, toil, and care, if there is no meeting again in some brighter sphere?

God of my life, whose gracious power
Through various deaths my soul hath led,
Or turned aside the fatal hour,
Or lifted up my sinking head;
In all my ways thy hand I own,
Thy ruling providence I see:
Assist me still my course to run,
And still direct my paths to thee.

CHAPTER XVII.

Auburn, Ala.—General Conference of 1866—Fight on American Bible Society—Member of the Committee to Revise the Seventh Article of Religion—Opposes Lay Representation—Lafayette Camp Meeting.

WITH my wife and six children, I bade adieu to the land of sunshine and flowers, and old and tried friends, to live among strangers, for whom we had never done anything and who were under no obligations to me or mine. But we met a kind reception among the good people of Auburn, where the East Alabama College was located. It had been once a prosperous and happy community, but was then poor and only a shadow of its former self. Brother M. S. Andrews was in charge of the station. He and his good wife did all they could to make us feel at home with them. We will long remember their kindness. Colonel Dowdell, formerly a member of Congress, had charge of the college, aided by brother Glenn, who still lives to bless the rising generation as one of the finest teachers in Georgia. Brother Dowdell has long since gone to his reward on high.

I had experience in the Bible work, and the parent society gave me a wide margin to give or donate large quantities of books to both white and colored. All the negroes wanted a Bible. They seemed to feel that to own a Bible made

them better. I was kindly received everywhere, as was the good cause I represented. Churches, Sunday schools, all needed Bibles. The Bible Society offered to forgive all the debts the auxiliaries owed the parent society. Strange that with all the kind overtures of the society, and its record during the war in sending Bibles through the lines to Confederate soldiers, Dr. McTyeire, afterwards bishop, and some others were opposed to continuing the same relations to the society as before the war. Dr. McTyeire was long my personal friend, and a most formidable opponent when he took sides on any question. He had the advantage at that time of the feeling of the South against any alliance with the North.

I was appointed by the Bible Society to represent them before the General Conference which met in New Orleans in 1866. The parent society had appointed brother G. F. Pierce, agent in Georgia, to aid me; but he failed to reach the Conference, and I was left to manage the relations of the society to the Conference as best I could. It was at that time the most delicate, difficult, and far-reaching problem I ever had to deal with. Comparatively few fully understood all the facts. The American and English Bible Societies own all the translations of the Bible in foreign languages. The whole Protestant Church was dependent on those societies for Bibles in all their foreign work. They were receiving an-

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nually large donations; for the Protestant Churches South, in the then crippled financial condition, could not successfully establish a Southern Bible Society. I knew that if the Southern Methodist Church went with the old American Bible Society that would settle the question, and there would be no attempt to organize a society at the South. Going back to our former relations to the American Bible Society was to the interest of the Southern Churches of all denominations. I knew that the South had always received more from the Society than they had ever given to it. I have never put on paper before or related to any one the trying ordeal through which I passed for several days while the General Conference was deliberating upon this great question. I was a true Southern man, fresh from the conflict only a year before, now among my own people and in the presence of my own General Conference, of which I was a member, representing the largest commercial and religious organization in the whole North, asking the Church not only to recognize it, but to adopt it, and appoint agents to represent it to the people of the South. I called on the president of the New Orleans Bible Society, who I found to be a good Presbyterian, and proposed to him to ask the General Conference to take part in a Bible meeting to be held in the church of which Dr. Palmer was pastor. I suggested to him the

members of the General Conference whom he should invite to make speeches and pray on the occasion. He selected Dr. Smith, of Virginia; Dr. W. Smith, of South Carolina; and Dr. Neely, of Alabama. We had in that large church a fine representation from the members of the General Conference, and our meeting was a success. The American Bible Society was adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. I wrote that memorable article which appeared in the *New Orleans Advocate*, on repairing the old Methodist ship from keel to masthead, taking out all the machinery that was inoperative, and getting from other Churches, Protestant and Catholic, all the machinery that gave them success. The article was approved by many of the leading men of the Conference. I did not know then, as I know now, that the living government and doctrines of Methodism were a stone cut out of the mountain without hands. Perfect in its birth, any addition or subtraction would only produce friction and mar the whole structure.

I reached the conclusion, after my long personal experience and general observation, that the Church and State would be greatly benefited by choosing men at least sixty years of age to revise and make their laws. Age obliterates personal ambition, and leaves the mind untrammelled to act for the best interest of all. Ambition for

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the general good is a great blessing, but when used for personal ends it becomes a great evil.

I was one of that ever-memorable committee appointed to define the nature and relations of children to the Church and salvation. I then thought I could formulate a dogma in a few hours that would explain the whole subject. Our committee met, and I was the youngest man on it. Dr. Poisal opened the discussion, and Dr. Hamilton and other Solons talked. When our first meeting closed I did not think I knew so much; and before the committee finished their work, I told Dr. Hamilton that I was convinced that I really knew nothing about the doctrine, and that my judgment was that we had better ask the Conference for four years' time to make our report. I had never studied the subject, only read what Mr. Wesley and Fletcher and other Methodist authors had said. I saw that the committee really knew no more of the doctrine than I did; in fact, all that any of us knew was a rehash of the old Augustinian dogmas on the subject. But they insisted on making a report, which we did. Dr. Doggett said we might discuss the subject until doomsday, and never reach a definition. He did not attempt to explain why we could never reach an explanation, but moved to lay the report on the table, and there it lies; and a great Church, with all its learning and wisdom, is without a definition of the relation of her chil-

dren to the Church and their salvation. I have often been accused by ignorant and uninformed persons of being heretical on this subject, while I have only been seeking a clearer light, independent of confused dogmas. I have studied in the light of Bible history and the wisdom of councils and synods upon this tangled subject for thirty years. I could not explain in the General Conference why the Methodist Church could not define the relation of her children, because I did not know; but I now know, because I have studied the subject. Mr. Wesley, in his "Doctrine of Original Sin," declares that all children are children of wrath, born under the displeasure of God, and subject to death, spiritual, natural, and eternal. Horrible doctrine; but while he held to Augustinian, Calvinistic premises, that all children were totally depraved, he ignored Catholic and Episcopal and Calvinistic remedies. He denied baptismal regeneration. He ignored infant salvation by election and imputation. He denied the doctrine of eternal damnation for original sin. This left the baby totally depraved. The Creator could not take the totally depraved child to heaven, nor could he send a justified child to hell. Therefore, Dr. Doggett said we could not explain it, and laid it on the table. What the Conference ought to have done was to reject all creeds and all dogmas, and simply accept the Saviour's teaching and final judgment on the

subject. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." That closes all discussion on the subject. The why and the how are with Christ, and the little children who die in their infancy are saved. That is the living doctrine of the Methodist Church, that teaches the salvation of all infants.

I was also on the select committee on lay representation. I was opposed to it; but if they would have it, I wanted it all the way through—to have an equal number of laymen in the bishop's cabinet, a layman from each district; and I am still in favor of it.

The four years' pastorate was gotten through by a very small majority. I have never known a preacher to accomplish much on any work his third and fourth years.

That was the most radical Conference that ever met to represent the Southern Methodist Church, and the best prepared to be radical. The American people are wild on what they imagine to be liberty, until the politics of the nation is but little better than a mob. Democracy is the highest possible form of government, but can only be successfully operated by the highest forms of morality and intelligence. When the government of a nation is in the hands of the ignorant and corrupt, the laws they make will be in the interest of their corruption. The whisky traffic is the effect of the corruption of the heart of the na-

tion. There is a constant tendency in the Methodist ministry to throw off the governmental restraints of the Church. All Churches by absorption naturally partake of the governments in which they live. The Catholic Church finds it exceedingly difficult to maintain her ecclesiasticism in this democratic country.

The state of Alabama was still under carpet-bag and scallawag rule, and those noble, patriotic Alabamians found it very hard to adjust themselves to the new order of things. Those carpet-baggers and scallawags kept the negroes in a constant state of unrest. The Kuklux seemed to be the only remedy to keep the negroes in check, and to enable the farmers to make a living for themselves and the negroes. For several years after the war the white people could not have any stock but their horses and mules. The negroes would steal everything they could lay their hands upon.

The last time I saw brother Daniel Duncan was in 1845, at the Lafayette camp meeting. I had preached the last night, from the text "Moses said unto Hobab, Come thou with us." Brother Duncan was piled up in straw in the altar shouting, while his good wife and the girls were going around singing. The whole atmosphere was full of the glory of God. I wrote to brother Duncan twenty years after, when he was stationed at Talladega, that I wanted to hold a Bible meeting.

He replied, "Come; my wife says come and preach from 'Moses said unto Hobab.'" When I reached Talladega he had me not only in the papers, but posted all around town. The choir was prepared for the occasion. Sunday morning came, and the large church was crowded. Brother Duncan was full of expected results, and the congregation on tiptoe. I saw it was simply impossible for me even to approximate the expectations of the people, and would have been glad of an excuse not to preach at all. I did the best I could with my surroundings. No one fell, and only a sort of an old half-crazy woman shouted, to the annoyance and disgust of the congregation. Brother Duncan rose at the close of the services and insisted that the congregation give me another hearing. The church was full at night, but with the same results. When we reached home after church, brother Duncan could not conceal his very great disappointment, and said to me that I was nothing like the preacher I was twenty years ago. He seemed not to recognize the difference between a glorious camp-meeting occasion and dress parade. Circumstances often have more to do with great sermons and great speeches than the sermons and speeches have to do with the occasions. It is a dangerous experiment for a man's reputation to go before him; it is always better to be behind him.

On another occasion, before I had shed off my old Confederate suit of jeans, which had been well worn, I was invited by an old Georgia preacher friend to preach for him Saturday and Sunday. He had a select congregation of planters, who composed the village and lived there for health. I preached on Saturday. An old South Carolinian took the preacher to one side and told him that I preached better than I looked, and he believed he would risk me for Sunday morning. Brother S. told him that I had licensed him to preach, and had been presiding elder for years, and filled the best appointments in my Conference. The old aristocratic brother came to me, invited me home with him, gave me a seat in his carriage, and treated me as a man of some importance. At the one place I began too high and came down; at the other place I began too low, and had to preach through that old Confederate suit before I could go up. Always put on your best suit when you go among strangers, for the public will judge a man by his dress. For men to be great and continue to be great, it is best for them to keep at a distance. I have known but few great men after I got near to them. One sermon or one speech often makes men great in history. I lifted a whole congregation to their feet while preaching, but never did it but once, and will never do it again.

I had visited during the year all the larger

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towns in Alabama and west Florida, and four counties in Mississippi. I found great destitution of the Bible everywhere. I was ready to visit the Alabama Conference, which at that time was not divided, but embraced all of Alabama and all of west Florida except Appalachicola.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Transferred to Alabama—Moves to Summerfield—Seven Years of Bible Work—Revival Work.

I MET the preachers of Alabama in Conference for the first time in 1872. At that time the Alabama Conference was the strongest in the Church, South. It was a grand body, composed of educated, cultured, representative men. The Conference was well equipped with educational advantages, having Centenary and Tuskegee Female Colleges, the Southern University (largely endowed before the civil war), and the Auburn College. All of these colleges were in full blast when the war came. Dr. Wightman was Chancellor of the Southern University; Dr. Wadsworth, Lupton, Wills, Cary, professors. Summerfield was a fine, healthy location. Centenary Female College was one of the oldest and best in the South. Dr. Wightman was a finished scholar and preacher, and the embodiment of propriety. Dr. Summers was a worker. Dr. Hamilton, originally from Boston, but a true Southern man, was not only a great preacher, but a great thinker and perfect man. Dr. Mitchell, a native Georgian and graduate of the State University, was a man full of all good works. He still lives
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to bless his race and the Church. Dr. Wadsworth was one of the finest theologians in the whole Church. Dr. Neeley was a natural-born orator. Dr. Murrah was a statesman. Brother Bowers had transferred to the Alabama Conference. Dr. Cotton ranked among the best scholars and thinkers of the Conference. Dr. Weir and the two brothers Heard were among the older preachers. The younger men — Dr. Moore, now of Oxford; Dr. A. S. Andrews, Dr. M. S. Andrews, Drs. McCarty, West, Rush, Andrew — all these, now leading men, were coming to the front. But what havoc the war made upon the ministry and membership of the Church, and how soon this once grand Conference was reduced from its former greatness! Death did its work. All the older preachers, except Dr. Mitchell, are gone to their reward.

The intelligence of the laity was abreast with their preachers. Alabama was not settled by adventurers, but many of the better and more wealthy classes from the older states went around and got into the rear of the Creek Indians, and developed that rich country. Alabama has more agricultural and mineral resources than any other Southern state. Some of the richest lands in the world are the black or canebrake lands in Alabama. There are mountains of ore and fields of coal, rich valleys and flowing streams, and endless timber resources.

Bishop Pierce presided at the Conference, and urged me to return to Florida. He jestingly said he would put me on the Tallahassee District during life. But I could not go back, because I saw my way open to educate my children by continuing in the Bible work. The good brethren of the Alabama Conference urged me to transfer. The bishop said I had run at large for a year, and that I must go back to Florida or transfer to Alabama. I consented, and he transferred me. I had made my arrangements to leave Auburn, not that I did not love the people, but I could not have college privileges for my girls and a good high school. Brother Hargrove (now bishop) and Professor Vaughn (now professor in Vanderbilt University) were in charge of the college. Professor Massey, who had charge of the male high school, is now president of Tuskegee Female College. All of those brethren were among the first educators in the land.

After Conference we moved to Summerfield. We reached Selma, eight miles from Summerfield, in a heavy snowstorm. Dr. Mitchell and his good wife extended a generous hospitality. The fragments of the old-time civilization still lingered at Summerfield. Many of the best Methodists in the state went there and lived to educate their children—brother Mitchell, Bishop Andrew, good old brother Jarrett, Hargrove, and brother Moore, the pastor, with other good men

and elect women. It was at that time a model community and had a model church. Hopes were expressed that the town and schools would again be what they once were, but slowly and certainly they continued to waste away; and now the grand old college, where three of my daughters graduated, has been converted into an orphans' home. The East Alabama College was turned over to the state. I was honored with a trusteeship in the boards of those colleges, and was opposed to giving up either of them. The time will come when real estate in the South will be valuable.

We had four more children born in Alabama, and after the older ones were educated the younger ones were to be cared for. I can see how I lived and provided for so many children, but it has always been a mystery how my wife, left the most of the time without my help, took care of them; but she did, and did it well.

I not only looked after my Bible work, but took a deep interest in all the educational enterprises of the Church; and besides all that, helped many of the preachers in revivals. For seven years I attended to the Bible work, and distributed Bibles and Testaments by the ten thousand. I collected from three to five thousand dollars a year for the Bible cause. In helping the preachers in their protracted meetings, I often found myself very much embarrassed because of the methods

I had been accustomed to adopt. I promised to help Brother M. in a ten-days' meeting. There were some leading men in the church who claimed the right to take two or three drinks a day. I knew of them, but did not personally know them. I was preaching one night, when one of the more prominent drinking brethren was seated in front of me. I did not even suspect him, but in the sermon said that a man was a fool who thought he could take three drinks a day and keep out of a drunkard's grave and a drunkard's hell. I admitted that I was a stranger to the people, or I would preach the whole truth to them—just take off the mask, and let them see themselves as they really were. Brother M. told me that after church he saw the brother holding to the fence, and said to him, "What would he have said if he had known us?" The next morning this same brother and others came to the preacher, who was a good man and true. They told him I must not preach any more; that the whole church and town were stirred as never before. One said his poor wife had prayed and cried nearly all night, and he had felt the whole town was full of devils. The preacher came to me in deep distress, and told me all about what was going on. I laughed at his fears, and told him the meeting was all right; that those brethren were only under conviction; that the sister's crying and praying was not the work of the devil,

as her ignorant husband supposed ; that the devil did not make people pray. He decided, after all my explanations, that it would be better for me not to preach any more. I told him that in less than twenty-four hours all the town and church would take my part and take sides against him. Sure enough, they sent for me to return ; but I declined the invitation. A genuine revival is a reformation of life, which is never accomplished without more or less friction.

I promised Brother B. to preach for him ten days, provided he would not put me out of the synagogue during the meeting. Our meeting went on deepening and widening, until the whole community was interested, some for and others against the movement. At last, two of the brethren and one prominent sinner decided that they would stand it no longer, and with another brother came to Brother B. and told him that I must stop. The brother who came with them was my friend and a pure man. Brother B. came to me and explained his embarrassment and his promise, but insisted that I moderate my preaching, yet resolved to stand by me to the end. I told him I would take all the responsibility for the final results of the meeting. That night I put on additional pressure. Next morning the house was crowded ; and while I was preaching, my influential sinner got up and came unmasked to the altar. Soon his worldly-minded,

gay wife followed him; then others came. I preached on. I looked over to my right, and there knelt the old doctor, an avowed atheist. By the time I was done, the whole congregation was moved. The storm blew over, and we had glorious results. Many of them remain until the present time.

After my girls were educated and my boys left college, I felt that I could manage to take care of my four younger children and go back again into the regular work. While I was Bible agent, I traveled by all conveyances, from an ox cart and on mule back to the cars. I visited every village, town, and city from the Tennessee line to the Gulf. I thought I would spend my summers in the mountains and my winters in Florida and the southern part of the state; but I learned the first summer that it was much hotter in the mountains than it was on the coast. I never saw the thermometer above 92° in Key West. It is cooler in Florida in the summer than it is in the mountains of Alabama, not only because of the breeze from the Gulf, but as we approach the equator the days and nights become nearer the same length.

CHAPTER XIX.

Returns to Regular Work—Union Springs District—
Stops a Man from Shouting—Dr. Pierce at Troy—
Consents to Go Back to Georgia—Transferred and
Sent to the Rome District.

THE Alabama Conference of 1873 was held in Eufaula. Bishop Marvin presided, and I was appointed to the Union Springs District. It lay about twenty miles east of Montgomery, and about forty miles west, and about thirty miles south. The most of the district was embraced in the black or canebrake lands. My general health was good, and I felt all the responsibilities of district work. I had forgotten, or rather thought I was beyond any danger of working myself down again. We located in Greenville, a growing town of about four thousand inhabitants. There were no railroads south of the place at that time. We built up a fine school, which was a great blessing to the town. They had just finished a new church at a cost of about fifteen thousand dollars, which I dedicated. The church was strong in its membership, and they gave us a hearty reception. I had a fine corps of preachers on the district. As Bible agent I knew most of the people, and the condition of the Church in the towns.

We started on the work of the district in earnest: held a ten-days' meeting in Union Springs,
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and added about sixty to the Church. My old friend Flemming Law, whom I had taken into the Church twenty years before, was living there and practicing law. Several of his children joined the Church. I baptized the whole family; and a few years ago in Gainesville, at Conference, I baptized the grandchild. I thus baptized three generations. The same divine influence that I had experienced in former years came into my soul again with great power. We added over a hundred members in Greenville. Over fifteen hundred were added to the Church on the district, and a good school was organized at all the important points.

I sent to Georgia to get Dr. Evans to help me at our Pine Level camp meeting. His elder brother and sister were living near, and tented on the ground. He came from Augusta, and his younger brother, a local preacher, Dr. Wadsworth, and Dr. M. S. Andrews were with us. Dr. Evans preached one of his stirring sermons Sunday morning. A brother C. ran a large farm, and had four fine fox hounds. He was tall and fine-looking. After preaching, he went off shouting, and continued to shout. I asked the preacher who that was shouting on so high a key. He said brother C. "Why," said I, "you told me that up to date he had paid no quarterage." I told the preacher jestingly to go and arrest him, stop him; that it would not do to let a

man who had paid no quarterage shout so loud. I had no idea the preacher would obey orders. Presently he came to the preachers' tent, where Dr. Evans and the other preachers were resting. Brother Johnson had gone to him and told him that I said he must not shout so loud, as he had paid no quarterage. I never saw preachers more convulsed with laughter. He stopped shouting and got angry. Dr. Wadsworth preached at the afternoon hour on conditional predestination. Dr. Evans's brother had married a nice Primitive Baptist lady, and the old Primitive preacher, who was an Englishman and a man of very good sense, stayed at brother Evans's tent. After preaching, he said Dr. Wadsworth had not touched Jacob and Esau and the potter and the clay. I told him I would touch them, and trim him up and cut off his Primitive top, and that he would not spread or grow any higher for years to come. I went home and wrote two sermons—one on "Predestination," and the other on "Final Apostasy"—and had sixteen hundred copies published. I have no copy left, but the substance of the two sermons will be published in a forthcoming volume of sermons.

Not long after the camp meeting, I was holding a quarterly meeting, when a tall, lean brother rode up on a very small mule. His feet were near the ground, and I told him he ought to be a shorter man or ride a taller mule. He said if his

mule was small he paid fifteen dollars to the Church. I told him that was too much for that little mule. He said he would run two plows the next year, and pay twenty dollars. It was the practice of the stewards to assess each mule on the farm five dollars. We had a large number of penitents at the altar. Captain Selmon preached, and at the close he called for mourners. The altar was crowded. When this tall brother B. began to shout, he went up one aisle and down the other, and among the mourners, and many of them were converted. Captain Selmon said to me, "Stop him, and let us open the door of the Church." I told him we could open the door of the Church, but as to stopping brother B. that could not be done; that he paid fifteen dollars quarterage and to other church purposes, and he had a right to shout; that I would keep the meeting open until sundown, and let him shout on. It was soon noised over the district that I forbade all shouting by those who had not paid their quarterage, and any one who had paid his quarterage might shout all day. Both circumstances were purely accidental.

On another occasion an old brother met the circuit preacher and myself as we rode up. He said I had never been to his house, and he wanted me to go, but did not want the preacher, who he felt had neglected him. I knew there was something up, but had no knowledge of what it was.

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I determined to go, and asked the old brother how I should go. He said ride his mule, and I told him I would. After lunch at the church, I told the old man to hitch the mule and go on, and I would come on as soon as the Conference was over. After a while he came and said his wife was not well, and maybe I had better come some other time. I told him no, I must go then. He came into the Conference and whispered that he was sick and must go. I learned from the steward that he had subscribed ten dollars for the support of the preachers and wanted an excuse not to pay it.

On another occasion four good old Primitive brethren decided that they would go out and hear me preach. I did not know them. My subject was "Grow in grace." I took up the Primitive doctrine of "once in grace, always in grace," and "when a man is converted he is complete"—no more growth. I illustrated: told the congregation I had ten children weighing from four to six pounds when born. "Suppose they had not grown any. Come and look at my posterity, all in their little cribs with their nursing bottles." I said it would not be so bad if some of the brethren did not mix a little whisky with their milk. I asked if a man could be worse afflicted than to have such a posterity. One of the old brethren, as he went out of the church, said he would not

get angry, for there was too much truth in what I had said.

Dr. Pierce spent some time with me in Troy. He was then a very aged man, only the shadow of his former greatness; but he was still a living, breathing shadow of what he had been. Troy was once a backwoods town, settled by Baptists; and when the Church divided, they still clung to the Primitive side. Many of them had become well off, and educated their children. Those educated children were deeply prejudiced against the Missionary wing of the Church, and had been brought up in the lowest forms of Calvinism. When I was Bible agent I often preached in Troy, and they would go to church and were attentive listeners; but my preaching seemed to have little effect. I have preached all my life for present results.

At the close of our District Conference held in Troy, I made a last appeal from the text, "You shall never taste of my supper." When I called for penitents scores came forward. Brother Moss, pastor of the church, continued the meeting, and nearly a hundred were added to the Church. I then saw more clearly the explanation of "Cast thy bread upon the waters." I was profoundly interested in the experience of Dr. Pierce, much of which was like my own. The burden of his inquiry was, why the gospel when preached did not affect the people as in former

years. I have had this experience more fully verified in the latter years of my ministry, and I am sure I have found the reason or prime cause. The Calvinistic Church relegates the whole of salvation to grace and the irresistible power of the Holy Spirit; and while there is some truth here and there in Calvinism, the whole lump is marred in the hands of the potter. The old doctrine of the Methodist Church held to regeneration and justification as a means of salvation, but put final salvation in the life of Christ in the soul. The power of Christianity is not only pardon and regeneration, but the doctrines of Christ in the living acts of the soul. He says, "My word is spirit and life." If the ministry and Church lived the life of Christ, then they would have the power of Christ. I suppose that no well-informed mind would question the fact that if the whole Christian public in Georgia would live in their lives the life of Christ, the sinners in Georgia could be brought to repentance in less than one year. Christianity is not only a belief of the truth, but it is in itself the life of the truth. "I am the life," says the Saviour. The life of Christ lived in the life of one man will correct a whole community of sin. This fact is clearly demonstrated in the conversion and life of the Gadarene. Such was the effect of the life of the convert that when Jesus returned the people gladly received him, for they were all waiting for him. The fires upon

our family altars are gone out, and in thousands of Methodist homes the fires were never kindled. We have big shows in the forms of religion, but the prayer meeting and the other church services are more thinly attended than before the big meeting was held. And the Church and world have their faith weakened in God and salvation because of the result of the spurious revival. A revival is a solemn farce that does not produce a radical reformation in the life of the revived. All this faith without works is a low form of Calvinism that has quietly stolen into Methodism and paralyzed her power; and in her spiritual paralysis she seeks to remove or remedy it by endless organizations. When we have built the altar and laid the sacrifice in divine order upon it is the time to call for the fire from heaven to come in flame and consume it.

I do not now remember having missed an appointment the whole twelve years I was in Alabama, but the four years' continued labor left me much weaker than when I began. I was fully convinced that I could no longer run under so high a pressure. During my last year on the district I received a letter from my true personal friend, Dr. O. L. Smith, asking me to come back to Georgia. I was much pleased with his invitation, and replied that I would be glad to come. I soon got a letter from Bishop Pierce to come and he would provide for me. I wrote him to

transfer me to Georgia, and it mattered not which Conference. I thought no more of it, as he did not write me. I had accepted the agency for the Southern University. When the telegram came I was transferred to the North Georgia Conference, and appointed to the Rome District. That settled the question. I had often heard favorable reports from Rome, but never had seen the place, only to pass by it on the railroad. I felt that I had made another mistake in leaving Alabama, where I had made many friends and become devoted to the preachers, who had been very kind to me. I saw that my idea of old Georgia was only a vision of the past; that I was now a man, and the old preachers, many of them, had passed away. I had never done any work for either the preachers or the people of the North Georgia Conference. They were under no obligations to me or my family. My children had been educated in Alabama, and my two oldest boys remained in that state. I had no future to look for to better my condition. Alabama and Florida Conferences had given me the best they had, and there was nothing before me better than I had left behind. I did not expect to better my condition; but although I loved Florida and Alabama so well, I always wanted to go back to Georgia. I felt that Methodism was on a higher plane there, and in this I was not much disappointed. There is no better type of old Methodism—I mean real

spiritual religion—than is to be found among the old Georgia Methodists.

We soon gathered all together, and my wife and four younger children took our journey for our new home. I had lived in Greenville four years, and loved the people very much. Many of the older ones have gone to their reward.

CHAPTER XX.

Moves to Marietta—A Snowstorm—Experience with
Some Preachers—Hotel Experiences—Cave Spring
—The Deaf Mutes—Salt Springs Camp Ground.

WE had a railroad all the way to Rome. When we reached there, brother LaPrade met us at the depot. I knew him and his parents at Appalachicola, when he was a boy. He took us to the parsonage, and although he had his mother, sister, little boy, and sick wife to take care of, he made us comfortable. We looked around and around for a house, but rents were high and houses scarce. I learned that the district only paid the year before about eight hundred dollars, just half the amount paid by the district I had left. I knew I could not pay large rent on that salary. It has been the settled habit of my life to live within my income, and generally a little below it. I have suffered for many of the luxuries of life, but never from debt but once.

There came a snowstorm, the deepest snow I ever saw. I finally decided to leave Rome, and try my hand on Marietta; and away through the snow we went. When we reached Kingston the train from Chattanooga was snow-bound, and there was no certainty as to when it would arrive. We could not go to the hotel for fear of being

left, and to spend the whole night in the depot was intensely disagreeable. The good brother who ran the depot invited me and my wife and children and three other preachers—Baptist, Episcopal, and Presbyterian—into the back room. My two younger ones had the sore eyes, and my patient wife was doing all she could to take care of the four children. I had on a fine suit of clothes, and not wanting to get them soiled, I wore a large white linen duster—and the snow a foot deep. I was a very unclerical-looking man. It was about two o'clock when the train came. Those preachers had discussed religion generally and Methodism in particular. My tired wife would look at me, and thought it strange that I did not resent their criticisms. The Episcopal minister at length said all the Methodists would finally come into his Church. I turned to him and said: "That is simply impossible. How could the Gulf of Mexico run into the Mississippi? Where would the Mississippi be when swallowed up by the Gulf? Besides, the Methodist Church would never accept the dogma of damnation for Adam's sin, nor baptismal regeneration, nor eternal and particular election." He replied that they did not teach any such dogmas. I asked him for his Prayer Book, and proposed to prove it by the ninth and seventeenth articles of their creed. He said he did not have his book with him. I asked him how he

was going to pray without it. By this time all were on their feet. The Presbyterian took no part; but as soon as the Episcopal minister retired, the Baptist preacher came in and said he just wanted to have the two axioms of the gospel—the supper, and to follow the Saviour down into the watery grave. I told him there was no water in the Saviour's grave, nor could he baptize a man at all in the way the Saviour was buried; that he was laid out in state, and the room where he was buried was large enough for men and angels to walk in; that to dig a hole and tumble a man into it was in no sense an emblem of Christ's burial. I told him that he would not know the gospel if he were to meet it in the road. All this the Episcopal minister seemed to enjoy. The Baptist brother, showing some marks of displeasure, said to me that he supposed I knew what the gospel was. I told him I did; that I preached it. He said that he would like to have it explained. I told him I would do it with pleasure; that the gospel was the introduction of the pardoning power into the moral government of God, by which God could be just and pardon a penitent believing sinner. By this time we had become better acquainted, and the discussion ended, and all was lovely. The good brethren helped us into the cars, and we went on together to Marietta. Brother LaPrade told me that he met the Episcopal minister, and he laughed

heartily at how I had used up the Baptist. Not long after he met the Baptist, and he laughed at how I had demolished the Episcopal minister.

We reached Marietta before day, and went to the hotel cold and tired. The next morning I went around and found my good brother Glenn. He started with me to find a house. We made the circuit of the town, but found only one house, an old brick building that had been used as a school and residence. It was the best I could do. Trunks, furniture, etc. had all been ordered to Rome, and had to be reshipped, costing double freight. I went in the deep snow to Atlanta, met my old friend Tommy, and got what I needed to begin again to keep house. No one proposed to help me to fix up. Fortunately I had the money to help myself. We stayed at the hotel three days. The proprietor was a wonderful Methodist, all his ancestors were Methodists, and I imagined I had put up at the right place. When I got ready to leave I doubted as to asking him for my bill, but thought I would be on the safe side. He said he would not be hard on me, and would only charge me seven dollars a day. I paid him twenty-one dollars. During the year he complained that I did not visit him. I felt that one visit was enough for my purse. If I had had less money, the brethren would have been obliged to help me, and I would have been more humble and the church made better. Often there are

more riches in poverty than we sometimes find in plenty.

My return to Georgia I found to be quite another thing from my ideal expectations. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." "Man never is, but always to be, blest." We soon made ourselves comfortable. The snow melted away gradually. We formed new acquaintances—brothers Glenn, Scott, and Lane, all good and true preachers and most congenial companions. I found Judge Sessions, an old South Georgia friend. Things began to look brighter and more comfortable and hopeful, and I became more fully reconciled to my charge.

The district was a large one, extending from Flint River on the east to the Alabama line on the west, and from Marietta on the north to Possum Snout on the south. I had on the district a noble, self-sacrificing corps of preachers. Before I had made my first round, I saw clearly that Methodism was not at her best in the district, and greatly needed denominational distinctiveness. Methodist preachers are generally open, broad-minded men. The gospel they preach makes them so, while other denominations are forced to resort to other methods. Our good Baptist and Presbyterian brethren were preaching Methodist doctrines and singing Methodist songs. After all, they did not turn to Methodists. Hawks eat chickens, but hawks don't turn

to chickens; but chickens do turn to hawks. I knew when I attempted to make our Methodism distinctive that I would have war. There are several classes whose professions and business naturally lead them to friendship with all. Merchants want the trade of all, doctors want to practice among all, and specially the politicians want the votes of all. I never knew a professional politician to be worth much to any denomination. If I have to compromise my convictions for the friendship of any one, I will not pay so dear a price. I told my oldest son, when he began the practice of law, if he could not practice without his father's Church influence, not to practice at all. If I were a doctor and could not practice on the merits of my profession, I certainly would not call to my aid my Church relations.

My good brother B. L. Timmons was on the Cave Spring Circuit. Cave Spring is one of the most desirable locations in all North Georgia. It was almost entirely dominated by the Baptists. They had a fine school. There were a few Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Methodists. There were a number of clever people out of the Church. I opened fire on the different doctrines held by the denominations, and the whole town was up in arms. Dr. W., a strong Methodist in name, was wrathful; in fact, the old Methodists were aroused, and all deplored my

want of charity, and the fact that I had stirred up strife. Brother Timmons, always good, tried to quiet things; but the more he tried, the worse they got. All the preachers on the district stood firm by their presiding elder. Brother Timmons said he did not think I would ever have another quarterly meeting at Cave Spring. I told him the third Quarterly Conference would come to the Spring; that the other denominations would abuse me, until the lash would pass over and strike the Methodist brethren in the face, and they would get Methodistically mad; that the officials would be out in force at the second quarterly meeting, and carry the third Conference back to the Spring. Sure enough, the brethren were at Conference in force, and insisted upon carrying the third quarterly meeting to the Spring. They said I must go and defend the Methodist Church. The issues were changed from personal to denominational conflict. When I reached the Spring, at my third quarterly meeting, the people were out in force, all expecting to hear a raid on other denominations. I ignored all knowledge of any strife among the Churches, and preached to the large congregation on the text, "All things work together for good to them that love God." I knew I was the prime cause of all the disturbance, and I had no feeling at all unkind toward any. The war ended, and a permanent peace followed.

Cave Spring was once a noted summer resort. The place was often taken up with the ball and dance. The brethren knew I would spend a night at the Spring, and announced that I would preach on dancing. I reached there hot and tired. The brethren informed me of the appointment. I remonstrated, saying that I was in no plight to preach on that subject, and if they insisted they would never want to hear me again. The house was crowded, and I dealt with the lascivious dance as it deserved. The women went off in a blaze; the men laughed. A couple of the finest-looking young men and women went away together. The young lady was very indignant at what I had said. Finally, the young man told her all I said was true. She said if it was he and the rest of the men were scoundrels, and she would never put her foot in another ball-room; and she never did. They married, and are good members of the Church.

Bishop Keener attended our District Conference at Cave Spring. He was delighted with the place, and was strongly inclined to make it a summer home. Many fine additions were made to the church. They have built a new church, but Rome and Cedartown had the advantage, and the place did not grow. The deaf and dumb asylum, or school, is located there, and has been for many years under the management of brother Conner and his excellent wife. They have been

a great blessing to those poor unfortunate ones who can neither hear nor speak. Several of them were converted and joined the Church. It was an affecting scene to see them received into the Church. While the preacher read to the president, he talked with his fingers to the deaf, and they answered the questions. I have often seen the effect of the loss of one of the senses, and have often tried to divine if the God of nature were to give humanity a sixth sense what it would be.

We had many ups and downs during the year; some stirring times in our quarterly meetings, in trying to increase the finances of the district. It has been the mystery of my life why the Church, as a general thing, is so liberal to the State and other minor objects and gives so reluctantly to the greatest of all interests—the Church of God, the hope of man's salvation—and to the cause of that God and Saviour from whom all our blessings come.

Our camp meeting at Salt Springs was an important occasion. Crowds from Atlanta and the surrounding towns attended, and specially on Sunday. The ground was full of tents, and a generous hospitality was extended to all. But the arbor was too small, and the seats were rough planks and slabs laid on logs. I told the people we would have no shouting at that camp ground. The seats were too uncomfortable to shout on. Brother Pierce was always with us,

and proved a fine helper. He knew how to preach and manage a camp meeting. I determined to fix up the camp ground, and called a meeting of the tent-holders the last morning. They were not in the best of humor about what I had said regarding the seats. I proposed to be a committee of one to collect the money and repair, enlarge, and seat the arbor. I put the question, and only one or two voted. I did not put the negative, but decided that I was appointed to do the work or have it done. I employed brother F. to do the work, and he did it cheap and well. I had to pay for the work. I asked brother Pierce to take the collection. He was not fifteen minutes in raising the amount and more than we needed.

Governor Colquitt preached for us at eleven on Sunday. He was a man of great sympathy. Many of the old soldiers he commanded were present, and they and he rejoiced together in the hope of an endless life.

Rock Mart and Vanwert were at war. The courthouse had been moved to Cedartown; the railroad had been run on the opposite side of the mountain, and Vanwert had been left out; the people wanted to move the church to Rock Mart. They had some cause to be angry. I did my best to keep in with both sides, but saw we must have the church at Rock Mart, where the town was located. I preached one night, and while pass-

ing along with the crowd after church in the dark I heard them criticising the sermon. They decided that they could not understand what I was preaching about. I gave this criticism serious thought. The next night I catechised the congregation, explaining the text as if I were preaching to children. I heard them again discussing the sermon. They said if Uncle Simon would preach that way they could sit and hear him all night.

I am fully satisfied that more than one-half of our preaching is an entire loss to the hearers. If any one will go back to his boyhood days and early life, and remember how little he understood of what he heard preached, he will reach the same conclusion. Preachers spend a large part of their important lives in preparing sermons which their hearers cannot understand. The pulpit is not the place for a man to show his learning or display rhetoric. The preacher is God's appointed judge, and the pulpit is the judgment seat where sinners are tried, convicted, and condemned for their sins. Whatever Catholics or Protestants may teach, the preacher is Christ's representative on earth to teach and enforce his law and repentance. The pulpit has to deal with the sins of the people. "Show my people their transgression." The preacher ought to study God's law and gospel, and then labor to bring his teaching in range of the intelligence of the hearers.

CHAPTER XXI.

Conference at Gainesville, 1877—Returned to Rome District—Drs. Mixon, Anderson, and Others—Camp Meeting Experiences—An Atheistic Club—Conferences of 1878 and 1879.

THE Conference of 1877 met in Gainesville. Bishop Pierce presided, and preached with all the grandeur and glory of former years. He was a very great man, all through and all round. He was great wherever he was, but personally never seemed to be conscious of his wonderful powers. I felt strangely but silently sad on entering that Conference room. The most of the members were comparatively young men; but where were all those grand preachers I dined with at that memorable feast in Columbus? Bishop Pierce, Dr. Evans, brother Trussell, Dr. Myers, and a few others were present; all the rest were gone—some of them still left in the South Georgia Conference.

I have lived in the most eventful age of the world. I have seen a nation born, and seen a nation die. I was at the funeral, when she folded her tattered flags and laid down her arms. I have lived to see a generation of preachers pass away. Soon I fondly hope to see them all again. There is an absence of motive now for me to praise or blame. I know Methodist preachers to be the most unselfish and purest men on earth. In all

my long life I have found but few of them untrue. All my ideal expectations will finally be realized when I meet again those grand old preachers in the great Conference where the Saviour presides, and no more hard places to fill or changes to be made. I was a stranger to the most of the preachers outside of my own district, as well as the circuits and stations in the Conference. The only place I ever seemed to meet with selfishness among Methodist preachers was in a bishop's cabinet, where all are looking to the general good, yet each presiding elder is looking out for his own preachers and the supply of his own district. Sometimes preachers think their presiding elders neglect them. This is a mistake. I have had the honor of being in twenty-six cabinet meetings, and I never knew a station or circuit preacher to be neglected, however humble his position might be. There is no class of men except the bishops who suffer such mental anxiety as presiding elders.

The first thing I knew many of my preachers were taken from my district, and I did not know where they were stationed. I became intensely concerned. My good brothers Yarbrough and Bigham came to my relief. They said they would stand by me and help me, but I had seen and met presiding elders before in the cabinet work. Brother Bigham never said much, but thought the more, and always kept an eye on his

works and preachers, and took good care of them. Bishop Pierce said he would look after me and my district. All things came out well. The Conference made me feel that I was no stranger, but one of them, and I soon felt again that I was at home.

My beau ideal of great men had passed. After a man is forty or fifty, the great men he once knew can never be duplicated. There is a very material difference in looking back at great men and looking forward. I have no doubt we have as many great preachers in Georgia now as we had fifty years ago, but it does not look that way to me.

I went back three years more on the district, and lived all the time in Marietta, one of the healthiest and finest locations in Georgia or anywhere else.

Brother Mixon and his good wife came to live in Marietta. I never lived by a better neighbor, a purer man, or a nobler Christian woman. She has gone to her reward.

Brother Anderson was stationed in Marietta. I had him with me for eight years, and he was my presiding elder for one year. He was, all in all, the purest man I ever knew. If he had any fault as a man, Christian, or preacher, in nine years personal acquaintance with him I never knew it. He was a lion in courage and a lamb

in meekness. He never complained or found fault with others.

Judge Lester was a noble layman, and General Philips became a great worker.

The longer I lived in Marietta, the more I became attached to the place. We made a strong fight for prohibition, but the whisky shops and the negroes defeated us. The county has since gone for prohibition.

My district was well manned. Brother Sam Jones was at De Soto, and showed evidences of mind and genius which he has so remarkably developed. Whatever may be said of his manner and methods, he is always on the right side of all moral issues. When any moral question is presented, he never fails to define his position with emphasis. Brother Jones is a natural man, and ignores the common restraints and conventionalities of society and the pulpit. God never called one man to preach to everybody; if he had, he would have molded the apostles in the same mold. Preachers who try to imitate others generally imitate their weakness, and not their strength. If young preachers would submit to a severe criticism by those more competent, they would find it a great help to their improvement. Men often fall into habits of tone and gesture, of which they are not conscious, that might be easily corrected if their attention was called to them.

Brother Robins was just beginning to preach.

He was a man of thought and books, and did fine work on his appointment.

Cedartown was not only a growing place, but the Methodist Church had in it a model class of men and women, some of whom are gone to return no more. Brother Myrick was stationed there while I was on the district. A good Presbyterian evangelist held a protracted meeting in the Presbyterian church, in which brother Myrick took a very active part and carried off the lion's share. Brother Peek and others were the fruit of that meeting. Brother Myrick ought to write a book on Methodist theology.

In preaching one day I remarked that the religion of the community was too much like some coffee—it had too much water in it. The son of a good old Primitive sister asked me to dine with him. At dinner the old lady showed me a cup of coffee and asked me to try that, saying she reckoned I would find it Methodist enough for me. It was as strong as coffee could make it.

An old negro had charge of the camp ground near Rome. It was his business to take care of the tents during the year. He had allowed the hogs to bed under the preachers' tent, and when we came to camp meeting the whole tent was infested with fleas. We spread straw all over the floor and set fire to it. I made the old negro put straw under the tent and fire that, and it caught the flooring. I told him to go under the house

and put it out. When he got under, he said it would burn him up. I told him he ought to be burned some for letting hogs sleep under the tent. That night I overheard him talking to another negro. "My Lord," said he, "these people had better be afraid and mind what that old presiding elder said. He would just as lief burn up a man as to look at him. He said he did not care if I got burned up just for letting the hogs sleep under the tent."

Two young men from Atlanta were at the meeting. In seating the congregation we separated the men and women. Those young men said they would show me that they would sit where they pleased, and with their girls seated themselves on the women's side. I was preaching. I told the young men that in self-defense in a promiscuous crowd we had to separate the men and women. I argued the propriety of seating the men and women apart. I had not heard of their threats. They sat still and looked defiantly at me. I told them they were mistaken, and did not know that I had been through two wars, and I would move them. As I started from the pulpit, the chief of police in Rome was seated in front. He sprang to his feet and asked me where they were. Others rose. The young men grabbed their girls and made full time down the hill. I never had any more trouble at that camp ground.

Our Salt Springs camp meeting was always an important occasion. Brother Pierce was my right-hand man. On this occasion Dr. Evans and Dr. Anderson were also present. I preached the opening sermon from the text, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." I said the only way to determine a line to be crooked or straight was by applying an acknowledged straight edge. That was God's law, which determined our lives to be crooked or straight. I said that I was not a finished workman, and would only use the jack plane and knock off the knots and rough places; that I had seen finished workmen with their long plane cut a shaving on the edge of a plank—cut a shaving as thin as paper for fifteen feet, and make a perfect joint. While I was using the plane one of the brethren got very angry and left the stand. Next morning he was harnessing up to leave the ground. The preacher remonstrated with him. He said he had no religion, and he knew I had none, and that he did not want to hear me preach any more. The last night of the meeting he was seated at the edge of the pulpit. When I finished preaching he rose up and grabbed me, and shouted that the Lord had his long plane on him and was cutting a shaving thin as paper from one end of him to the other!

Brother Worley, on the Haralson Mission, had stirred up his Calvinistic and Baptist brethren by

preaching on predestination and the modes of baptism. The people were out in mass on Sunday at the quarterly meeting. I took the text, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." I said I would not discuss the freedom of the will in connection with personal responsibility; that it would be only a question of time when all the Protestant Churches would be Methodist. There was present the representative of the county, a good Baptist. He had come some distance to hear me preach, and took his seat in front. When I said all Protestants would be Methodists, he shook his head in dissent from me. I told him I would prove it; that if a tree leaned in a certain direction, when it fell it would fall in that direction; that a Missionary Baptist was more like a Methodist than a Primitive; that a Cumberland Presbyterian was more like a Methodist than an old-school Presbyterian, and the new way among the Lutherans was more like the Methodists than the old way; that all the changes that had been made in the Calvinistic Protestant Churches in the last fifty years leaned toward Methodism, and when they fell would fall into Methodism. He kept his head still. After church, some of the brethren asked him what he thought of it. He said he had not heard it put that way, and he would go home and think about it. The Methodists never lose anything by an enlightened discussion of their

doctrines. The common sense of mankind is in line with pure Methodism.

I have made it the fixed habit of my life always to attend my appointments, hot or cold. The coldest day I ever saw I went from Marietta in the mail hack to Powder Springs, ten miles. There lived on the way a man whom I had re-proved at camp meeting. I did not know him personally, and reproved him among others. He became very much offended, and determined to settle with me on sight; and although a sober man, he was a very reckless man. I felt that it was my duty to be prepared for any emergency when passing that way. When we came to his house on the side of the road, cold as it was he was at the gate cutting wood, and he began to curse at me. I told the driver to whip up. I knew he had an ax and I had powder, and that any conflict would be quickly over. When I was younger I went right through, but as I got older I saw it paid better to go around. I never met him afterwards, and did not want to. I learned by experience in earlier life that a man could not preach and fight.

An Irishman, half drunk and a bitter Catholic, made a raid on me by cursing me for a thief and a robber that had climbed up another way. I made him no reply, but left him. He followed me, and I left him again. He followed me to the third place and continued his insults. Finally

he punched me in the side. That was too much for my patience, and I rose and took him by the collar and threw him heels over head. As he went he struck against another man who was passing, and both fell in a heap on a pile of trash. I came near sending a chair after him, but held it. No one said anything about it, but I felt it deeply, and felt that I could have avoided it.

I had to preach Sunday, which I would not have done if I had had any one to take my place. My text Sunday morning was, "By their fruits ye shall know them." In selecting the text I had no thought or reference to my trouble with the Irishman. The best lawyer in town was a deist, but my personal friend, and often went to church. He was present that morning while I discussed my text by saying we must not judge men by one or two acts, but must take the life of the whole man; not to take Christ when scourging the rascals out of the temple, but take him when weeping over Jerusalem and on the cross; not to judge of Peter only when denying his Lord, but also when he was crucified for him. When I came out of the church my lawyer friend came up smiling, and said he would give me a partnership; that I was in the wrong place, and ought to be at the bar; that I had whipped an Irishman during the week and had ingeniously lugged in my Master and the brethren in extenuation of my offense. Devils and infidels always laugh and rejoice

when preachers fight, and Christ and angels weep. "I say unto you, Resist not evil; that is, resist not evil with evil, but overcome evil with good. Fight the good fight of faith."

When I reached Powder Springs I felt as if my nose and whole face were frozen. My good sister Anderson soon had some hot water, and I bathed and greased my face, and was glad to feel that I was all right again. My zeal was not according to knowledge. I ought not to have gone out that dreadfully cold day.

Marietta, with all its fine location, mountain scenery, health, churches, and good society, had a club of out-and-out atheists, led by Maj. W., one of the prominent men of the town. They held their regular meetings. The secretary of the club called to see me. He was an educated gentleman. He said they would be glad to see me at the scientific club. I accepted the invitation, but he never informed me where they met. I invited him to church. He said he would be glad to hear me discourse outside the Bible. I said I could do that for a whole year to him and the club before they would be prepared to hear and practice the truth in the Bible. I told him I could give him approximate truth without the Bible; that if he wanted a garden containing an acre of land, I could step off seventy steps square and he would have about an acre; but if Moses, Christ, Buddha, and Mahomet all claimed land

about the same place, and he wanted an exact acre on his own land, that I must have my compass and chain. If he wanted an approximate width of a river, I could draw down the rim of my hat and measure the opposite bank, and then make the circle and step it off, and about give him its width; but if he wanted to be exact, I must have my instruments. I could approximate adultery and murder, but to be exact I must have my Bible. "When a man looketh on a woman to lust after her, he hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." He promised to come and hear me preach, which he often did, and all the others but the old major, who called the preachers "mutton-heads."

I learned that the old major was anxious to fish with me, a sport we were both fond of. We arranged for a fishing about ten miles away. We started before day. I was determined to make him the aggressor. At last he opened up by saying he supposed that I knew that science had made the discovery that one side of matter was life. I told him that Moschus, an old Phœnician philosopher, had taught that philosophy before the time of Moses. That theory had been exploded and abandoned by the pure atheistic philosophers more than two thousand years ago. Huxley and Darwin were at that time at their best, in full chase after the origin of life. They

had not yet declared that there was no life without life. I said to the major: "You love lamb, and have eaten many lambs; now if one side of matter is life, and that life lamb, when you eat it why don't you turn to a sheep, instead of sheep turning to you?" In all my long life, and with all my experience with atheists, I have never met but two men who had really studied the atheistic philosophy. I have generally found them ignorant of the philosophy they pretend to believe. The two well-informed atheists were modest, respectful gentlemen. The old major asked me for the strongest evidence I had of the truth of prophecy. I told him a Jew. He said he hated them. On one occasion I asked him what he thought of St. Paul. He said Paul was a fanatic. I replied that I was not a fanatic. He admitted I was not. I told him I would tell him what happened to me forty years ago. He said he would not hear it, and would leave the buggy if I persisted in relating my experience.

I was passing on the sidewalk one beautiful morning, where the old major and others were sitting. He bade me good morning; said he saw the sun, the mountain, and forest, but did not see God. I told him that his observation reminded me of a recent law case in the West about a dog that was shot. The lawyer, in examining the evidence, told the jury that there was an important link out of the chain of evidence; that it was

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in evidence that the witness saw the man raise the gun, and saw it fired; that he saw the dog fall, and found the hole in him, but that the witness did not see the bullet go out of the gun. With all the contempt we may express for atheists, they have a bad influence on society wherever found. Their creed is free-loveism and a loose rein on all the passions. It is the life of men that makes atheists. It is a weak subterfuge from the wrath of their own conscience. It is often the shadow of despair from some great crime. No man is an atheist who lives so as to feel that a God will approve his life. The great abuses of religion may drive some forms of mind to doubt all religions. Atheism is like the Dead Sea—there is no life in it.

The country and town were in a prosperous condition. The preachers on the district were harmonious. I tried at one or two points to start my hobby of Methodist schools, but found the public school system had absorbed the public mind, and all efforts in that direction would only end in failure. I can only say that I am out and out opposed to the whole system. It is unjust. It costs more in the long run in the salaries of officers than it pays, and it must, from the very relation of things, always be more or less superficial in results. Mind, soul, and body are one man, and must be educated together. The mind cannot be developed in one place and the morals

in another. The heathen know better than that. We are what we think, and we think what we have learned. A man without moral culture is like a ship without a helm—may be wrecked in a calm.

The district had advanced in its finances. It paid the presiding elder from thirteen to fourteen hundred dollars. That enabled me to live and keep out of debt.

The Conference of 1878 was held in Marietta. Bishop McTyeire presided. He was a fine presiding officer, a man of strong will, a good thinker, but not the equal of some of the bishops as a preacher. I knew him intimately from early life. He made but few mistakes in life; generally matured his plans before he presented them. He was a strong man in debate.

The Episcopal minister attended the Conference. I asked him what he really thought of it. He replied: "It is the big Sanhedrim."

But few shadows came over my life the remaining two years I stayed on the district. I became acquainted with the most of the preachers, and learned to respect and love them as I had loved those I had left behind. Dr. Hopkins and brother Jones had gone to Alabama.

The Conference of 1879 was held in Augusta. Bishop Keener presided. He is one of the noblest and truest men of the age; true to his convictions as the needle to the pole. He is a fine

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presiding officer. I have known him from early manhood.

General Evans had to leave Rome on account of his wife's health. He was popular with all. Dr. Evans was sent to Rome. The brethren at first complained of his age, but soon learned to love him.

CHAPTER XXII.

Conference of 1880 Held at Rome—Appointed to St. James, Augusta—Second Blessing Troubles—St. John's, Augusta—A Jewish Rabbi.

OUR next Conference (1880) was held at Rome, and Bishop McTyeire presided. This closed my four years on the district. I had neither the physical strength nor the surroundings to accomplish what I had done in other years. The district was too large for the presiding elder to do evangelistic work. A presiding elder ought to have either ten or thirty appointments. There is no reason now why a presiding elder should hold four Conferences on each work.

I was appointed to St. James, Augusta. The Conference, in my judgment, acted wisely in my appointment. From my long experience, I find that it is not the best either for the preacher or the Church to keep any man too long in any one position. While the presiding eldership expands a man in some directions, in most cases it contracts him in other directions. But few men will come down to hard study unless circumstances drive them to it. Men often, without being conscious of it, get into grooves and stay in them until their environments force them out. Four years is long enough for any man to stay in the

presiding elder's office. The Saviour said we should go out and in and find pasture. I had been eight years on districts, and needed a change.

We soon sold out what we had, and were on the train for Augusta. We met a hearty reception, and found a comfortable home. Brother Jarrell had been there for four years. He is a faithful pastor and hard worker wherever he is—a noble, conscientious, consecrated man; and if not always right, he thinks he is. If the people of the Church would follow his example, they would not go very far wrong.

I found the church almost equally divided on the doctrine of the "second blessing" theory. There had grown out of the doctrine some very bitter feelings on both sides. Several families had left and gone to St. John's, and others were going. I found myself in very delicate and most difficult relations. I was the pastor of the whole church. Fortunately I did not agree with either party on the doctrine of holiness, and determined as far as I could without additional strife to reconcile all parties to my views. I was holding a holiness or consecrated meeting in the church, with a large attendance, and all parties more or less at the altar seeking holiness according to my explanation of the doctrine. I invited the presiding elder to preach one night, and he threw a bomb into the whole camp, scattered all my

plans, and intensified the strife and party spirit. After long and faithful investigation of Mr. Wesley's and Fletcher's teaching on the doctrine of Christian perfection, or holiness, I was forced to the deliberate conclusion (against my early prejudice for all that Mr. Wesley and Fletcher had said) that they could not reach a clear and distinct definition of the doctrine of perfection, or holiness. Their theology from early life had been complicated with infant damnation for original sin, and baptismal regeneration. This view of original sin and the remedy for it in baptism complicated their doctrinal views. The Episcopal Church holds that while baptism saves the baptized from God's wrath and damnation, yet it does not eradicate the original infection. Mr. Wesley still clung to the analogy that spiritual regeneration did not entirely eradicate the original infection. He still held to the old Augustinian dogma that original sin was the root and cause of all sin. Mr. Wesley, finding that neither baptism nor spiritual regeneration eradicated the original infection, was forced to find some other remedy, which he called the second work, or blessing; and often many who professed it continued to sin, and many of them fell entirely away. Finally he was driven to the conclusion that men could not attain angelic or Adamic perfection. Adam and angels sinned, and therefore there could not be any such state as sinless per-

fection, or holiness, at all. I never felt that my loyalty to Methodism was dependent on my accepting all Mr. Wesley's teaching, for in his long journey from Calvinism to Methodism he passed through many changes. I have always held that there was a second blessing and a higher state attainable than that reached in regeneration and restoration to the kingdom of God. There is a responsibility to be met in the life of a regenerated man that requires the aid of the Holy Spirit and the freedom of the will to consecrate the entire life to the service of God in the love of it. This state of mind and heart is dependent upon cross-bearing and self-denial in a holy life. As every other blessing is retained either by men or angels, there is no state attainable beyond temptation and the possibility of sin. Christ was in all points tempted as we are.

St. Paul gives us a clear and distinct definition of this whole holiness problem. He says: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." The Bible certainly teaches two very different kinds of blessing. When a penitent sinner is pardoned, the Lord says, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven"; but he says to his faithful servant, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." There is not one Church member in twenty who ever consecrate

their whole lives to God after they are converted and never feel the joy of God's approbation. This is really what our "second blessing" brethren mean. I was anxious to go with them, for there was much good work in their lives; but I could not afford to stultify my reason and general information to accept their theory of sin. The possibility of sin is an inhering possibility in the reason, conscience, and freedom of all moral beings, for ends, and not a hereditary effect. Angels and Adam sinned, and they were not the descendants of a fallen parent. Every sinner who is honest with himself is conscious that he is the author of his own sins, and there is no appeal from this personal, conscious fact.

Brother LaPrade was at St. John's. That grand old church was still trying to keep up its prestige of bygone years, but was not what it was when I visited Augusta in 1845, and brother Lewis was stationed there. I preached a week for him, and that was then a church of great power and influence.

Dr. Mann returned to the North Georgia Conference. He was a cultivated gentleman and an eloquent preacher. He had a nice home near the city, where he spent his last days. I knew his father, a noble Christian man.

Brother Burrell was a grand layman, the salt of the earth, dared to be religious anywhere. He carried his religion into all the business rela-

tions of life. His religious profession was lived out in his life—a living epistle read of all Augusta. I managed to be the pastor and preacher of all parties. My doctrine of living holiness was acceptable to all.

There was an old infidel living in the east end of the town. The brethren said he was sick, and I might do him good. I called on him. He said he did not want any of my sort. I told him that I cared about as little for him as he did for me, and that the Lord did not care anything more for him than he cared for the Lord, and when he got to hell he would have no one to blame but himself, and no one else would care; but if he should change his mind, to let me know, and I would change my mind toward him. Some of the brethren visited him, and he sent for me. I found him very penitent. He said he was too great a sinner ever to be saved. He was finally converted, and I baptized his grandchild. He said he wanted me to baptize him, which I did. When I baptized him he broke out in a cry; said he was sixty-five years old, and had to be baptized then like a baby. The old man died all right.

I had a similar case once before—that of an old sinner. He was a large planter. His wife was a good Methodist. The old man was all drawn up with rheumatism. He could not kneel, but managed his farm by riding in a sulky. He

was growing worse, and the doctor's counsel was that he might die at any time. I passed by his home and called. His wife wanted me to pray for him. I went into his room. He was in his armchair. I told him his wife requested that I should pray for him. He said I might pray if I wanted to. I told him I was not anxious, and it was too late to pray unless he intended to act, and act at once; and if he would lean forward, and promise to be a better man, I would pray for him. He said he would not do it, but I could pray if I wanted to. I told him I would not pray unless he complied. I soon reached my hand to tell him good-by. Said he, "Are you not going to pray?" "Not unless you lean forward on your stick," I said. He broke down and leaned forward. I prayed for him, and left him penitent. He died before I saw him again. He sent me word that I was right in all things in preaching but one, and that was, he was not going to heaven, but heaven had come to him; and he went off in triumph. Sinners often think it would be an accommodation for them to repent and accept salvation. The highest offer God ever made to man is the offer of salvation.

The Jewish rabbi came often to see me. He was a man of varied learning, and a broad-minded man. I got from him much valuable information on the Old Testament. He had read the New Testament with great care. He often came

to church. He said he could accept Christ as the manifestation of God, but not as God; that there was but one God. If Christians would treat the Jews more kindly, they might do them more good. They feel that all Gentiles are their enemies, and that all Christians hate them. My friendly relations with the priest brought many of his people occasionally to my church.

Good brother Parker was at Asbury, and brother Dillard at St. Luke's. I knew brother LaPrade when a boy, and always loved him. Brother Dillard was very congenial, and invariably brought sunshine with him. Dr. Mann, whom I knew in other days, was always a benediction when he visited the parsonage. General Hilliard, whom I knew in Alabama in his palmy days, often preached for me. He was in very many respects a great man. Brothers Joseph Miller, Bondurant, and Feris were all prosperous and did good work in the church and city. The good women did real pastoral work by organized charity. A nobler set of Christian women I never found in any church. All of our collections were up, and my assessments and the presiding elder's fully met. I received a present of a fine fifty-dollar suit of clothes in which to appear at Conference.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Conference of 1882—Returned to St. James—Preaches on Baptism—The End of the Controversy—Fishing on the Edisto River.

THE Conference of 1882 was held at Milledgeville. I was returned to Augusta. All met me kindly, and I was glad to be returned. No church was better equipped with a corps of active male members. Brothers Brown, Wigle, Deas, Morris, and a score of others, were always ready for every good work. Early in the year after my return a Campbellite preacher, a man of some ability, came to Augusta. The Campbellite Church was strong in the city, supported largely by a wealthy person. The new preacher preached for several nights on baptism, and wound up by declaring that all pedobaptists held to immersion. Several of my members asked me to reply to him. I told them that the Methodist Church did not hold to immersion as a dogma, but simply as a right; but I would preach on the subject, something I had never done. When I began to examine the subject I found that it grew upon me. I preached after I had partially looked into the subject. I usually wrote my sermons, but never took them into the pulpit. Several of the brethren called on me for a copy for publication. I

further examined the doctrine, and handed over the manuscript. Brother Wigle soon had the sermons out, and they were all over town. I expected the Campbellite brother would reply, but to my surprise my good friend and brother Landrum took up the debate and soon published a reply. He was the most popular preacher in the city, and socially a very lovable man; but in his sermon he was like a pig in a china shop. He used invectives and personalities; took in Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Jews; stirred up the whole town. All the parties he had attacked came to me to redress their grievances. He sent me a note and two of his sermons. I replied that I was running fire down at St. James, and had no time to look after his waterworks at present; but when my revival closed I would take him out of the water, hang him on the fence to dry, then set him afire, and take him into the Methodist Church. I had sent to me books upon books on the subject of baptism, by the preachers of the town generally, of all the other denominations. I decided fully to examine the whole subject before I replied. The rabbi was ready to give all the information he had or could get from his fine library. Brother Landrum had called the Jewish religion an "old rag" that had long since passed away. I took up the question, and spent about six weeks upon it. I got many valuable suggestions from books, but

on a more thorough examination I clearly saw that baptism was always in the Church, from Abel down to the present time, and always had its mode and meaning, as sacrifice was always in the Church and had its mode and meaning. The general idea that baptism was substituted for circumcision is unscriptural, for baptism and circumcision were both in the Church at the same time, and the one could not be a sign of the other. I engaged the service of my rabbi friend to give me a strict translation of the Greek into the Hebrew. I studied Hebrew, but made no claim to scholarship. The rabbi gave me his translation: that the word "baptize," when translated into Hebrew and then into English, always meant to sacramentally cleanse. The sacrament of cleansing with water was always performed by sprinkling. This view is in perfect harmony with the general teaching of the Bible.

The day of judgment came. We went to St. John's church, because it was the largest church in the city. All the churches were represented. Brother Landrum was present. The Baptists themselves admitted that I had gotten the better of the discussion. I met brother Landrum the next day. He did not seem like the same man. I was sorry for him, and proposed to help him to reply to me, and we would publish together. He declined. His church treated him badly. They ought to have stood by him, for he was laboring

for their cause. He said he would leave the city. He went to Virginia. On his return he came down at night to St. James. I insisted that he should preach for me. When he went into the pulpit there was a general smile all over the house. He preached for me, and we parted good friends. He was really a very nice gentleman. I never allowed my personal differences to interfere with my personal friendships. I have always accorded to others what I claimed for myself—the right to my own convictions. If I have to give up my convictions for the friendship of any one, I decline to do it, because it costs me too much. My sense of right is worth more to me than the friendship of any one.

Once a year the St. James brethren went fishing down on the Edisto River. We rode in a car of our own, switched off at the station where we slept and ate. Brother Jarrell was with us. There were about twenty of us. We sang and prayed at night. The old fellow at the depot kept whisky, and we gave him a wide berth. Another party went down, and were not very successful. The old depot man told brother Burrell that about twenty preachers had come down and sung and prayed all night, and had caught all the fish in the river.

Our controversy made no break in my friendly relations with the Baptists in the city. The division and strife among the brethren were grad-

ually dying out, and I was in better relations to be useful. I always liked the itinerant life of change, but sometimes it is not for the best to remove preachers. It is only under favorable conditions that a preacher is a full success the third and fourth years. Bishop Pierce was bitterly opposed to the extension of the pastorate. While the tendency of other denominations is toward Methodism, it is equally true that the tendency of Methodists is toward other denominations. While they are adopting our strength, the Methodists are absorbing their weakness. When we gave up our grand congregational singing for the organ and choir, and the lining our grand old hymns for the interlude, we made a vital mistake. Our fathers were mighty men in the hymn book, and it was a mighty power in the Church. The preacher read the hymn, then he lined it. The congregation responded in song. It was doctrine, prayer, and praise—the best prayer book on earth, and used to the greatest advantage. It gave life and spirit to all the service. The choir is more or less a disturbing element in all the churches, and mars the devotional spirit of the church. The devil often makes music for the saints; often the singing is void of all worship, a mere performance. But it is here to stay, and we must make the best we can of it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Conference at La Grange, 1883—Paine Institute—Appointed to Griffin—Conference of 1884—Dalton—A Great Revival—Reflections—Dalton Again, 1885.

THE Conference of 1883 met in La Grange, with Bishop Pierce presiding. The Paine Institute was fully ventilated, and many eloquent speeches were made. When it was proposed at the General Conference to turn over our colored members and churches to the African Methodist Episcopal Church, I stood alone and opposed the movement. I never did favor giving up our colored people. I believed then, and I believe now, that we ought to have kept all our members who were willing to remain with us. It was a misfortune to both races when we allowed the Northern religionists and politicians to separate the races in their Church and political relations. The nearer any people are together in their religion and politics, the better for all concerned. The Northern religionists and politicians are responsible for all the race troubles, and have shown themselves utterly incompetent in Church and State to deal with the great question. There is no settlement of the race problem but to let it alone, or entirely separate the two races. If God had intended all the races of men to live under

the same forms of government and civilization, he would have made them all alike. In the days of Peleg, about a hundred years after the flood, the earth was divided. God gave to Ham Africa, to Shem Asia, and to Japhet Europe and the west. Of choice the different families never migrate or amalgamate. The negro can never conform, only mechanically, to the white man's civilization.

I was removed from St. James, which was a mistake. The people were very much disappointed. Without my knowledge they had raised my salary three hundred dollars the past year, and all assessments were paid up. The differences in the church were almost ended and peace restored. I was appointed to Griffin. The brethren met us with very great kindness. The parsonage was furnished and well supplied, but I had to live on eight hundred dollars less than I had received the year before. The brethren, however, paid all they were able to pay. The Griffin church had many valuable men and women in its membership. We had a revival, and a number were added to the Church. The year passed pleasantly away.

The next Conference (1884) was held at Dalton. Bishop Pierce, who presided, told me he was in trouble; that he had too many big men on his hands and nowhere to put them. Jestingly I told him to put me in Dalton. He said he be-

lieved he would; that Dalton was said to be a hard place, and that I was a hard case, and we might just suit.

I was appointed to Dalton station, and met a hearty and kind reception. Dr. Lee had been there the two years before, and the church had built a fine parsonage. The Dalton Female College is located there, and had been run successfully for years by brother R. Smith and his good wife.

We had a hard fight for prohibition, and won a grand victory. That town is a monument of the blessings of prohibition. There have been constant improvements going on from year to year. Prohibition is a great blessing to the negroes and lower white classes, who are unable to send off to whisky towns and buy it by the jugful.

The Methodist Church in Dalton was and is well represented by men and women of fine intelligence. A female college is a great blessing to the girls and women of any town. Knowledge is power wherever found, in men or women.

We had a most prosperous year. There were about eighty additions to the Church from all sources, including one of the most successful revivals I had held since my return to Georgia. Brother Mixon was my presiding elder, and rendered valuable assistance. The young people were moved in mass. The most of them still remain in the Church.

I stirred up the good Presbyterians and Baptists, and some Methodists, by preaching final salvation at the last judgment, by personal righteousness. Some of the brethren thought if what I had preached were true they would all be lost. One lawyer said all his works were filthy rags. I told him that might be true; that in olden times when men took sides against the right and oppressed the widow and wronged the orphan, and still offered sacrifice and prayer, their religion was compared to filthy rags; but the Lord did not call the widow's mite filthy rags. I finally compromised by referring the discussion to the Bible, and stated that if any one would show me a single text, either in the Old or New Testament, that justified any man in the last judgment outside of his own personal righteousness, I would retreat. I heard no more from the sermon, only the judge, who had been silent, asked me to step into his office several days after, and told me I was right; that he had read the New Testament through carefully, and there was not one case of justification in the last judgment by grace.

I went back to Dalton the second year (1885), which was another mistake. I scarcely held my own either with the Church or congregation. It would have been better both for me and the Church had I stayed but one year. The preacher often knows best when to move and when to stay.

CHAPTER XXV.

Conference of 1886—Goes to the Athens District—Visits Alabama—The Salvation Army—The Earthquake—The Jews.

THE Conference of 1886 was held at Newnan. Bishop Wilson presided. Our young men were coming rapidly to the front. Some of the older brethren were left out and the younger ones elected to the General Conference. Some of the good lay brethren from Griffin came to me privately, as they were going to leave Conference, and told me that I would be sent to the Griffin District. I wrote at once to my wife to sell the cow and pack up the blacking brush and get ready to go back among our old friends in Griffin. But when the appointments were read I was placed on the Athens District.

I made my son in Greenville, Alabama, a visit for the first and last time. I had not been back to Alabama since I left. I found things much changed. We are in a world of constant change—nothing settled, nothing still. Well might Abraham say he had no continuing city here, but sought one whose builder and maker is God.

We reached Athens in fine spirits, and met a warm and hearty welcome to a large district parsonage which the ladies were trying to prepare

for our reception. If the Church people only knew it, they make much by the small outlay to render a preacher comfortable. When he is warmly received and kindly cared for, his preaching is warm and hearty; he feels his gratitude a living thing. But when treated with indifference, his preaching is more or less like a cold dinner—it lacks not only the fumes of the stove, but the fire of heaven.

Brother Jarrell was pastor, and worked with all his might both as a pastor and in the pulpit. He is seldom still—always at his Master's work.

Athens has many fine advantages—the State University and two fine female schools, located in the most fertile district in the state. The Methodist Church was strong in all respects, but unfortunately very much divided on the holiness question. The opposing forces were not like those in Augusta, but there was a deep and restrained feeling between the two parties. I resolved as presiding elder to ignore any division in the Church. I told them the holiness that the Church in all this country needed first was sixteen ounces to the pound, thirty-six inches to the yard, and one hundred cents to the dollar in the payment of their debts; and when they had learned that lesson well, I would turn over to another. I found the Church and country all moving calmly along, with but little friction. The children as they came up had been quietly

received into the Church, and there were not many who did not belong to some Church. There were some parts of the district largely dominated by the Baptists; but many of the once leading preachers had passed away, and there were few to take their places. Washington was an elegant little town, and reminded me more of Quincy, Florida, than any place in Georgia or Alabama. Brother LaPrade was stationed there. Brother Cofer, on the circuit, was always at work, and is still at it, trying to help somebody.

The district was well manned. Athens and Clark county had been prohibition for a number of years. Oconee and Oglethorpe were dry. Jackson went dry. Wilkes made a hard fight for prohibition, but lost it. We had some fine revivals and many additions to the Church. The people knew how to respect and treat a preacher. We had some trouble with the Salvation Army when it first appeared in Athens, but it finally died out. Whatever good it may have accomplished in other places, it certainly was only a disturbing element in Athens, and did much more harm than good.

While at camp meeting the earthquake occurred. Our camp meeting was rather far back, and we had much disorder. The lightning struck a large oak while brother Bond was preaching at night. I was preaching when the earth shook. The people were much alarmed, and we had no

trouble to get mourners in an earthquake. The altar was soon crowded with all classes.

Brother Anderson was sent to Athens. He was a man of great prudence and foresight. He knew the power of silence; took no stock in the division of the Church, and the trouble on the second blessing theory died out. He remained on the station four years, respected and loved by all.

I continued on the district for four years, and I never spent a more quiet period in my whole preacher life. All lights and no shadows. Every need of mine and of my family was kindly met without complaint. The university boys were always well-behaved. The Jewish rabbi and I became intimate friends. He was a man of fine learning and broad in his charity. One day we were walking by the Methodist church, and I said, "Rabbi, I would like to make you a Christian." He replied that I might, if he had ever seen one; that he had often looked for a Christian, but had never seen one. The Jews as a distinct people are the wonder of the ages—a nation without a home in the ends of the earth. It is their religion that separates them from all other people. Their presence is demonstration of the divinity of the Bible.

In early life all my prejudices were against the Jews, but in after life I have had reason to change my mind. The Israelitish Church is certainly the grandmother of Catholic and Protestant

Churches. However mistaken the Jews may be, they are certainly true to their convictions. They carry with them the revelation of the true God wherever they go. They live in all countries under the ban of caste. Their strict adherence to dogma keeps even the more enlightened from investigating their own prophecies, and from all progress. While dogma is essential both to unity and stability, it has always been a bar to open and frank investigation and progress. As citizens the Jews, in their present relations, are of no special advantage to society. They are traders and nonproducers. They have a remarkable moral record. But few Jews have ever been executed, and but few if any are in the chain gang.

I was on the cars one Saturday, and met a nice Jewish woman of my acquaintance. I thought nothing of seeing her on the car on Saturday, but she said the reason why she was traveling on her Sabbath was that her mother was sick and she had been to nurse her. I told her that our Saviour said, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." She had on a dark veil; she turned it aside, looked earnestly at me, and said, "Do you think I will be saved?" I told her I thought she would; that when that other veil was removed, she would see that the Christ she was looking for would be the very Christ and Saviour that had already come. Her Saviour that was to come was my Saviour who had come.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Conference at Cedartown, 1890—Bishop Keener—Griffin District—Covington—Conference at Cartersville, 1892—Madison—Infidelity—Conference at Madison, 1893—Conference of 1894 at Rome—Superannuation.

THE Conference of 1890 was held in Cedar-town. Bishop Keener presided, and I was appointed to the Griffin District. The brethren met us kindly, and hospitably entertained us until we could get a home. It is a powerful strain on a preacher's pocket to begin keeping house with a family when he has everything to furnish. Here we had to begin anew, to furnish everything. Every district, circuit, and station ought to provide a home for the preacher.

The Griffin District embraces a fine country, a number of nice villages, and is in all respects a pleasant work. I had a year of prosperity and success. For the first and only time in my whole presiding elder work, the district paid in full all the preachers and the presiding elder. We had as a whole a happy, prosperous year. Griffin had been cursed for years with a strong whisky power, but at last has gone dry.

Conference was held at Washington in 1891. Bishop Hargrove presided, this being the first time he had visited the North Georgia Conference.

For the first and only time in my life I asked a

favor of the Conference, and was denied that. I was appointed to Cartersville, and was delighted to get back among my old friends. We were received in good style. My friend Samuel P. Jones and his good wife and many others were present to welcome us to our new home. They have a fine parsonage, well furnished. Brother Jones and his wife have been a great help to the church in that town. It is a strong church altogether. I was never more heartily received anywhere or more kindly treated. I had the grip early in the year, and the effect of it left my mind and body in a dilapidated condition, so that I could not preach up to my usual standard. Brother Lovejoy was my presiding elder, and he is a good man for that office; looks after every interest of the Church, and is always at his work.

The next Conference (1892) was held at Cartersville. Bishop Key presided. I was appointed to Madison, and left my old Cartersville friends with many regrets. We met a hearty reception in Madison. The brethren and sisters were at the parsonage in force.

Perhaps no town in all Georgia has been so bitterly cursed with atheism and infidelity as Madison. Much of the wealth and intelligence of the place for a whole generation has been under the curse of an open infidelity. I attacked the infidelity of the town in the pulpit and personally in the press, the effect of which was to

bring infidelity into ridicule and contempt. We had a revival on a small scale.

The Conference of 1893 was held in Madison. Bishop Fitzgerald presided. The good people of Madison put out their best to entertain the Conference. I was appointed to Covington, where I spent the last two years of my ministerial life. Brother Bigham was my presiding elder the first year. He was a man of mind and energy. It was unfortunate that I was removed—not on my account, but the whole people of Madison felt that the Conference was indifferent to their overtures, after all they had done to entertain it.

My general health had not fully recovered from the grip when the next Conference met (1894), and I was not able to preach as in former years. I thought it due to myself and the Church I had so long served to retire from the active work. But I was returned to Covington. Brother Anderson was my presiding elder. I mentioned my purpose to him, and he was out and out against my retiring. When he went to heaven good brother Candler took his place for the remainder of the year, and not only helped me on the station, but did faithful work on the district.

Covington is cursed with the whisky traffic; and while there are many good and true men and women in the church, it labors under many disadvantages. While in Covington I formed

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many associations which I still remember with very great pleasure.

Conference was held in Rome at the close of 1894. I enjoyed meeting again my old friends, but the great trial of my long life came upon me there. The inevitable, which I had often thought of as in the far future, came at last. I tried to stave it off as a vague illusion, insisting that I was not old, that I was the same man I always was. But seventy-six years of life and fifty-five of that as a Methodist preacher, with a wife and ten children to educate, had not been a dream. But could I cease to work, go from Conference without an appointment, see the sacramental host all in arms and ready to march, and I left out? God only can give grace and strength to meet such an issue. Thank God, it comes but once in a life. I remembered the long night of prayer and struggle at my father's home, when I obtained the final victory to give my boy life to God as a poor Methodist preacher. That was a long night of hard struggle. No one but God and my own heart knew of that long night struggle at Rome, when I at last consented no longer to be an effective preacher. I have heard many say they wished they could re-live their life again. I have made many mistakes, but I have no desire to live my life over, lest I might make many more. I have never been a bigot, or allowed myself to be put in chains by creed or en-

vironments. I have always breathed the air of freedom. I had not read but studied all religions, and some philosophies. I have always believed in the existence of truth, and have sometimes wished I had been born on an island or in the desert, with all my faculties unbiased, so I might find the truth. There is some moral truth in all religions, and much truth in all the Churches. I have no prejudice against any, either Catholic or Protestant, but I am sure there is more of real truth in living Methodism than is to be found in any other religion or creed. I have not the shadow of a doubt that the doctrines of pure Methodism will be preached when the last nation surrenders to Christ.

I have had my trials and sorrows, my joys and triumphs, as a Methodist preacher; but after all is past, if I had a hundred lives to live I would give them all to God and the Methodist Church as an itinerant preacher, and then weep that I had no more to give.

I am here with my good wife, who has patiently and uncomplainingly traveled side by side with me for nearly fifty years. We are on our farm, trying to dig out of the ground, by the timely aid of the good Conference, an honest living; and while all my outer senses are still perfect, and I feel no diminution of mind, I feel that the fire that once burned and blazed so fresh is gone.

never in this life to come back ; and now nothing is left but the dying embers.

In the chapters contained in this book some scenes may have been painted too bright, while others may lack color. I have written by the request of many whose opinions and judgment I respect. If I have misrepresented anything or anybody, it has not been intentional ; or if I have neglected any I ought to have remembered, they are only among the thousands I would have liked to remember in this imperfect volume. If I have an enemy in the world, I don't know it ; and I am sure I have no hatred to any. May God's blessing rest upon all, and hasten the time when all flesh shall see his salvation !

CHAPTER XXVII.

Home on his Farm—Meditations—House Destroyed by Fire—A Pleasant Round of Travel—Bishop Galloway—Sam P. Jones—About Methodism.

“THEN I said, I will die in my nest.” When I asked the Conference for a superannuated relation, I was not really in an important sense a superannuated man; but I never intended to be a burden on the Church, and felt after fifty-five years of hard work, without a single respite, that the time had come for me to rest and prepare a home for old age. My farm was not a failure, but it was not a full success. The river came over my corn and washed it away, and I had either to buy corn on a credit or accept help from the Conference for the incoming year. The Conference board kindly responded. I had spent what I had on house and furniture, and while my nest was not lined with down or velvet, it was comfortable, and I had a home for my children to visit. I felt all the time about Friday of the Conference that I ought to pack my valise and leave for my appointment. I never did feel that I was not a regular preacher, but when I knew I was not it came over my soul in extreme sadness. I could not realize that my itinerant life was ended. I would say to my older brethren, Don’t superannuate until the Lord clearly superannu-

ates you. The brethren may want a young and active man, and you may want a young and active church, and you may have neither ; but I am fully satisfied that age and experience are better for the Church than youth and inexperience.

My daughter, who had been afflicted for years, got well ; my dear, good, aged mother-in-law went to heaven ; my grandson went to preaching, and left me and my good wife alone. These changes were all unexpected.

One cold night last December my house caught fire, and before I was aware of it the flames had gotten beyond control, and everything went—library and all—except a few things in the front rooms. We slept that night in the barn on the cotton seed. In a few days I disposed of all that was left, land and all, at a sacrifice. My nest was burned up, and I was not able to rebuild.

When the war ended, of which I have treated in another chapter, I was left penniless, with a wife and six children to educate ; but my hope was also left. When my house burned down, my hope of ever having another home went with it. This was the severest trial to my manhood I ever experienced. The last thing on earth I ever expected was to drift, but I have learned to believe that all I could not help was for the best. If I had obeyed the Saviour and taken no thought for to-morrow, the furrows in my face would not

have been so deep. Since the day I entered upon the life of an itinerant preacher in 1840, until this hour, I have always been fed and clothed. I have found a resting place; and although sometimes a very humble bed, it was the best the people had.

I have spent a pleasant year traveling around among my children. I had several bales of cotton left, and all my needs have been supplied. I have never needed much, having never lived for myself.

I met old friends in Macon—the brothers Branch, of Florida memory. I preached on Sabbath in Mulberry Street Church, where I was received into the old Georgia Conference when a beardless boy. I am now the only one left that lived there. I have seen a generation pass away, and a new one take its place. I have seen a nation born, and seen it die.

I had a pleasant visit to Montgomery, Alabama, and out in Mississippi. I have been able to preach often and hold protracted meetings.

It was my very great privilege to attend once more the North Georgia Conference, the grandest Conference I ever saw. The preachers received me with great kindness, which I will long remember. I saw many of my old friends who still live in Athens, one of the most refined and cultured cities in the South. Bishop Galloway is a noble spirit, a fine officer, and a superior preacher. May he live long to bless the Church

and world! After many years I had the pleasure of meeting my old friend, the Rev. S. P. Jones. He has changed some; looks more mature. I heard him deliver a grand lecture at the opera house. He is simply inimitable. He has a strange power and influence over men, and he is a power for good and against all evil. The Lord makes only one such man in a generation. He is now a national man. I once thought he would pass away like a meteor, but he is here now to stay. It would take volumes to speak of all whom I have known who are gone, and many who still remain.

I want to say a few words about Methodism. I am no bigot, but have been a close observer of the Christian world for more than fifty years. I have lived in Catholic communities, and for ten years was a general agent of the American Bible Society. I have been directly in touch with all Protestant Churches. I have heard them discuss doctrines and the past and future of their denominations. I have marked with profound interest the many changes constantly going on in the theology of all the Churches. The time may never come when Protestant Christianity will unite in one Church, but, with my long experience and general observation, I have not the shadow of a doubt but that the gospel of Mr. Wesley will finally be the gospel of Protestant humanity and Protestant Christianity. The gov-

ernment of the Methodist churches in America is the best government in the whole Church. It has more power and resources to develop men and character than any other Church in the world. The Church government develops all sides of a man, and in its final results comes nearer presenting a perfect man than any other system.

I have studied all religions and doubted all religions, but one, and that one is the life of Christ in the life of the soul. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." I would advise all young men to let infidel books alone. If you never drink, you will never be a drunkard; and if you never study infidelity, you will never be an infidel. No possible good can ever come to you by such study, and much doubt and evil may. I have been able to silence many infidels, but if I ever convinced one by argument I don't know it. I have seen many convinced by the Holy Spirit, and converted too. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

ORIGINAL SIN.¹

THE doctrines of the "Federal Headship" of Adam and "Original Sin" are clearly stated by Mr. Wesley in his work entitled "Original Sin," page 429: "Adam's sin was the sin of a public person, one whom God had appointed to represent all mankind; hence all these are from their birth children of wrath, void of all righteousness and propense to all sin." Calvin gives in substance the same view in his Institutes, vol. i., page 229: That God appointed Adam the temporal, spiritual, and eternal representative of his race; that he fell and subjected all his children to all these forms of death; and that all men are by nature totally depraved, and by nature subject to God's wrath and damnation. How this natural depravity is propagated, Mr. Wesley admits he does not understand, but believes it is.

¹Through the kindness of the Hon. J. W. Wigle, of Augusta, Ga., I have been placed in position to publish the peculiar views of Dr. Richardson on the above subject. This will show some of the boldness of the man, and much of his originality as a thinker. The article was prepared, at the suggestion of Mr. Wigle, for publication in one of the Augusta papers. The manuscript remained in his hands until furnished for publication in Dr. Richardson's autobiography. It gives me real pleasure to publish it in connection with "the lights and shadows" of his life.—JOHN B. ROBINS.

I. We notice the history of the doctrine. Mr. Wesley says, "Original Sin," page 428: "The phrase 'original sin,' so far as we can discover, was first used in the fourth century. The first who used it was Chrysostom, or Hilary. After that Augustine and other Christian writers brought it into common use." I can find no account of the doctrine in any Church history I have. I suppose Mr. Wesley fully examined the history of the doctrine, as he wrote a book on the doctrine when he was more or less Calvinistic in his belief.

Pelagius, who was more learned than Augustine, declared that original sin was not a doctrine of Christianity. Augustine did not attempt to prove that it was. Calvin, in his Institutes, vol. i., page 225, declares that "the early fathers were afraid to proclaim the doctrine, and compromised the truth between the Scriptures and the philosophers"; and yet it is historically true that many of the early fathers died for the truth.

Original sin was not a doctrine of any religion, heathen, Jew, nor Christian, before the fifth century.

II. We now examine the Bible history of the doctrine; and we find in this examination that Adam's posterity is not mentioned in connection with his sin in the whole Old Testament. It is not even mentioned in the law Adam violated. Neither Adam nor his posterity is mentioned in the Noatic, Abrahamic, or Mosaic covenants;

nor is his sin and posterity mentioned by any of the poets or prophets in the Bible. There is positively no statute or judgment in all the laws God gave to Moses that refers in any way to original sin. Christ, who carefully corrected all the errors and mistakes of the doctrines of the Church, never even refers to Adam's sin in connection with his posterity. If any of the patriarchs, or any of the prophets, or the Saviour ever held a meeting to get rid of Adam's sin, there is no account of it on record. All the inspired writers, and all the fathers in the Church, down to the fifth century, defended their faith and God against the atheists by appealing to his wisdom, power, and goodness in the creation of man, and God's providence over the world. (See the whole Bible, and the writings of the fathers down to the time of Augustine.) There is no statute of judgment in the whole Bible that refers to original sin in mankind. There never was any sacrifice, but the body of Christ, offered for Adam's sin on patriarchal or Jewish altars.

We cannot go to the Bible to prove or disprove the doctrines of the federal headship of Adam and original sin, because these doctrines were unknown to the inspired writers. Is it not impossible that two foundation doctrines of Christianity should have been unknown to the Church for over forty-five hundred years?

If God ever appointed Adam the moral federal

head of mankind, temporally, spiritually, and eternally, when and where did God ever make such an appointment? If God ever appointed Adam anything but the common father and progenitor of mankind, there is no evidence of it in the Bible. Such is the moral nature and personality and individuality of man that one man cannot morally represent another without his will and consent. The law under which Adam was placed, and the penalty annexed, was such that Adam's sin could not morally affect his race. I suppose no sane man would argue that if Adam had lived a thousand years and been the father of a numerous family before he sinned, then would his retrospective family have all died the day their father sinned. Such was the penalty of the law that it could not affect his posterity prospectively, for he was to die the day he sinned; and that death would have been a physical death, for Christ, who died for Adam's sin, died a physical death. The penalty of Adam's sin was never visited upon him nor any of his posterity. The day of his execution was not put off, but Adam was pardoned. (Rom. v. 18.) The free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

The Bible is clear and distinct in its teaching upon the doctrine of moral, imputed sin. God declares that the son shall not be put to death for the sin of the father. In the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel this whole question is fully discussed,

and God's judgment clearly stated—that the soul that sins shall die. The Lord declares that the sin of the father no more affects the moral conditions of his child than his eating sour grapes puts his child's teeth on edge.

The only one of the inspired writers that mentions Adam's posterity in connection with his sin is St. Paul (Rom. v.). The apostle is trying to prove to both Jews and Gentiles the universality of the atonement, and he uses the analogy between the universal fatherhood of Adam and the natural law of heredity, and the universal saviorhood of Christ and the effect of the atonement upon Adam and the race then in his loins. The argument of the apostle, in plain language, is this: Adam was the only man then living, and all men were in his loins. He was condemned by the law to die the day he sinned, and in law was legally dead. So death passed upon all men; that is, the life of the race was cut off. And if the penalty of the law had been executed upon Adam, that would have been the end of the race of Adam. But he was pardoned, and the free gift came upon all Adam's posterity then and there in his loins. If all Adam's race were in him when he was condemned to die, then we were all dead. And if they were all in his loins when he was pardoned, then in Christ we were all made alive.

The Bible declares that God will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third

and fourth generation of them that hate him, and show mercy to thousands who love him and keep his commandments. The law of heredity is a natural law, not a moral law. A child born consumptive is not therefore a sinner, and a child born with a strong body is not therefore a saint. Sin and holiness do not inhere in the natural law of heredity.

Christ by his atonement restored Adam and the race in his loins again to law and probation, and to citizenship in the kingdom of God. Christ says of little children, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." This doctrine of original sin has been an inexplicable something ever since it was brought into the Church. God has prescribed no remedy for it. The Catholic and Episcopal Churches propose to save men from its damning effect by legal baptism; and yet they admit that the infection still remains after regeneration, justification, and baptism.

This brings us face to face with the origin of the "second blessing" doctrine. And although Mr. Wesley himself never experienced this second work, yet he in one part of his life more or less believed it; but in his old age he warned the Church against putting too much confidence in sudden conversions. See his Long Minutes, published in 1771.

The Church since the time of Augustine has mistaken the natural, inhering possibility of sin

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in man's moral nature for a natural, hereditary depravity. The whole system is a chimera of a heathen brain. Angels sinned; Adam sinned. They did not sin from generation, but from the inhering possibility of sin in creation. The possibility of alcohol existed in the first ear of corn that was ever made; but the possibility of alcohol in corn is not alcohol. The possibility of sin in Adam and angels was not sin. Pain is a possibility of the flesh, not for its destruction, but for its preservation. Pain finds its origin in feeling. To eliminate pain from the flesh would be to destroy feeling in the flesh. If pain destroyed the feeling of the flesh, then the destruction of feeling would destroy pain, and pain would be self-destructive. The possibility of sin inheres in all moral agents, and to destroy it would be to destroy the power of good and evil in man's moral nature. The doctrine of the "second blessing" fails for want of evidence.

It is a fact of universal experience that those who profess to have attained the second blessing still have in their nature a constant tendency to sin, and a constant liability to sin under temptation. Some of the best men and women who have professed the second blessing have fallen, and gone back to the world. All who fail to watch and pray will fall. If the second blessing is complete deliverance from original sin—and that is the root and cause of all sin—then if

the roots are taken out, how could such persons sin again, or how could their children have any of the old Adam in them when there was none in the parents? The Saviour was tempted to the last. St. Paul kept his body under subjection. The highest point reached by men or angels in probation is victory over sin. Regeneration and justification are all grace can do for any man. A man may be pardoned and justified, and never be holy; but no one can be holy who is not regenerated and justified. Holiness is the consecration of a regenerated, justified man to the service of God. Christianity has a human side and a divine side. Pardon is the divine work, holiness is the human side. Holiness is not grace, but the improvement of grace. Grace unimproved is damnation. "Thou wicked and slothful servant." "Pure religion and undefiled is to visit the fatherless and widows," etc. Holiness is run backward to Adam and never gets there. Mr. Wesley says we cannot be as holy as Adam was before he fell. Suppose we could be as holy as Adam was, what would we make by it? He fell under the first temptation. God runs the whole machinery of salvation forward to "well done, good and faithful servant." The false view is to get holiness by faith, and then practice holiness. If we can get holiness by faith, why not keep it by faith, and not practice it at all? If we drink our water before we dig our well, then why dig the well?

The true doctrine is to practice holiness and then be holy. "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse," and then receive the blessing. The Calvinists teach that God pours out the blessing, and then they bring in the tithes. But if they already have the blessing, what is the use of bringing in the tithes? St. Paul gives the true doctrine (Rom. vi. 22): "But now being made free from sin [by regeneration and justification] and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

The Bible nowhere requires a man to repent of Adam's sin, or to be cleansed from its effects. "But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. . . . If we confess our sins [not Adam's], he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [not Adam's sin], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 7, 9.) One man can no more feel conviction for the sin of another than he can feel pain when another man hurts himself. One man may suffer for the ignorance or sin of another, but no man can feel remorse or condemnation for the sin of another. A man may be ignorant, and think his conviction for sin is his inherited depravity; he may be regenerated, and call it cleansing from original sin; and he may call it holiness, and after he is converted, if he consecrates his life to God's service, he is holy. His life may be right, but his theology false. Many people are willingly deluded. They

think they are holy, when their dress, extravagant living, and whole life are a burlesque on the word. Christ was holy, and we are holy as we are like Christ. Holiness is a life. "Be ye holy." Bishop Paine said when he was seeking holiness he never thought of Adam's sin, and he called repentance for Adam's sin a myth. It is a chimera of a heathen brain, which no one believes and no one practices.

III. The common convictions of mankind. The Bible nowhere discusses the nature of man, but everywhere regards man by nature as one capable of being very good or very bad. The doctrine that man is by nature a liar, rogue, and murderer is a libel on both God and man. Greenleaf, the standard on evidence in all the courts in Christendom, says, "A man naturally tells the truth." Children learn to lie, but they have to learn it. By nature they tell the truth, and some children never lie at all. Children generally tell a thousand truths to one lie. All social, commercial, and governmental relations are based upon the truthfulness of man. If man was by nature a liar and rogue, we could have no society, business, or government. Truth in man is the rule, lying the exception. There is not a temple or altar on earth dedicated to falsehood or theft. Man by nature hates falsehood. Mankind believes man can do right, and that he ought to do it; and if he does, God and man approve his action; that man can do wrong, and if he can, he ought not to do it, and if he does, both God and man condemn him for it. Even in Scotland, where both preachers and people all preach and profess to believe in total depravity, they deal in Church and State with men as though they had the power

and ability to do right. No one practices on the doctrine of natural human depravity. And there is not an adjective nor adverb in the whole Book of God that says a man's nature is either sinful or depraved. David says, "I was conceived in sin"; but he was not conceived sinful or born iniquitous. Christ says we must be converted and become as little children. Now if little children are little devils and totally depraved, why did Christ make such corruption the standard for his kingdom? If children by nature are subjects of God's wrath and damnation, and regeneration makes grown sinners like them, heaven must be a very depraved and corrupt place.

Augustinianism or Calvinism has cursed the Church and humanity ever since the days of Augustine. The whole barbaric system ought to have perished in the heathen brain that gave it birth. Mr. Wesley says that Calvinism is not only no gospel, but in the way of his spreading scriptural holiness over the land. The doctrines of the moral federal headship of Adam and original imputed sin are the foundations upon which this whole false religion rests. Mr. Wesley in his transition state from Calvinism to Methodism still held more or less to Calvinistic premises and denied Calvinistic conclusions. Therefore we have never been able to harmonize Mr. Wesley with Mr. Wesley. While Mr. Wesley held to the Calvinistic doctrine of man's natural total depravity, he also held that no man was condemned in this world or damned in the next for Adam's sin. Then what good can come of getting rid of a thing which neither condemns us here nor damns us hereafter? It is a great to do about nothing.

